



the
VEGAN RESET
WEEK ONE: NUTRITION
DAY ONE: CALORIES



Calories

INTRO TO VEGAN NUTRITION

The general population of individuals in the modern world are in a state of malnutrition. In the United States and United Kingdom in particular, there is a trend of being overfed and malnourished due to consumption of ‘junk’ food and food-like products. The easiest way to circumvent this is by eating more mineral and vitamin rich foods; Vegetables being the most mineral dense food on the planet while fruits being the most Vitamin rich. Having a whole-foods plant-based diet is essential in correcting this 1st world malnutrition imbalance. Meat, eggs and dairy offer only trace minerals and vitamins, containing large amounts of saturated fat and cholesterol - both widely accepted to lead to atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease. Eating real, fresh food is the easiest way to make sure you're becoming nutritionally whole.

That being said, there are many misconceptions when it comes to both nutrition in general and vegan nutrition in particular, so this week we will take a closer look at general and plant-based nutrition. Here's what you can expect from the daily lessons in week 1:

Week 1 overview:

Day 1: Calories

Day 2: Weight Loss and Weight Gain

Day 3: Macro and Micro Nutrients

Day 4: Deficiencies and supplements, part 1: Protein

Day 5: Deficiencies and supplements part 2: B12, Iron, Calcium & co.

Day 6: Soy and Gluten, why the bad rep?

Day 7: What's the best diet?

Calories

Day 1: What are calories?

A calorie is a unit of measurement used to determine the potential energy of food. The number is reached by how much energy is released after the food is burned, thus determining the amount of calories in a given food item; however, that still doesn't dictate how many calories are even digested and how much is actually used.

What we do know is that metabolic functions are powered by the calories digested. It is the energy that allows our lungs to breathe air, our brain to function, our heart to beat and innumerable other activities. We do not, however, digest all that we eat and calories are more often than not, no indicator of food quality.

When trying to determine your own personal caloric limits there are many different things to consider, such as if you're a child, teenager or adult, if you're an athlete or a homebody, height, stature, etc.

The combinations of these answers will give you a much more accurate idea of how many of which calories would be best for you. The answers can range from as low as 1700 calories to as much as 12,000 for extreme athletes such as Michael Phelps.

Something you'll notice if you're switching over to a Plant-Based Whole Foods diet is that the portions will seem much larger when in fact, the calorie count is the same or at times lower. The reason behind that is that there are much less "empty" calories when you eat whole foods.

If you are curious to refine an estimated number of calories you specifically "should" consume, you can calculate Basal Metabolic Rate.

Calories

To find your BMR, you will need to know your height in centimeters (cm), and weight in kilograms (kg).

The equation is called the Harris Benedict Equation:

For Men:

$$\text{BMR} = (\text{height in centimeters} \times 6.25) + (\text{weight in kilograms} \times 9.99) - (\text{age} \times 4.92) + 5$$

For Women:

$$\text{BMR} = (\text{height in centimeters} \times 6.25) + (\text{weight in kilograms} \times 9.99) - (\text{age} \times 4.92) - 161$$

If you'd rather skip the math, you can always find a BMR calculator through a quick internet search and plug the numbers there!

Here's one that will compute an approximate daily calorie suggestion:

<https://manytools.org/handy/bmr-calculator/>

Calories

Focus more on nutrients than calories

Obsessing over calories won't do you or your body any good if you're not making sure you're receiving the nutrients you need. The reason so many people end up overeating on processed foods is because they contain so called "empty calories", so the portions are small but the calorie content is high. As an example, one Big Mac contains 563 calories, which is the caloric equivalent of almost 5 and ½ bananas! One of the many amazing benefits of eating a whole-foods plant-based diet is that you'll end up eating bigger, more fulfilling portions without the excessive calories.

In tomorrow's lesson, we will be discussing how to use calories to achieve your personal goal, whether it be weight loss or weight gain!