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FUEL YOUR FITNESS

THE ULTIMATE PLANT-BASED ATHLETE'S GUIDE





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FEATURED ATHLETES

These professional athletes appear in ECP's "Plant-Forward and Powerful" Education Package

Look for their contributions throughout this guide for real-life advice from the pros!



DOTSIE BAUSCH

Olympic Medalist (Cycling)



GAYETANO ALEXANDER

Parkour Athlete & Ninja Warrior



BRIAN REYNOLDS

Marathon Record Holder



ELLA MAGERS

Muay Thai Practitioner



GIACOMO MARCHESE

Champion Powerlifter



KORIN SUTTON

Professional Bodybuilder

NUTRITION NUTRITION NUTRITION

People who followed a healthy plant-based diet had the lowest risk for heart disease, were more active, and leaner.

A healthful plant-based diet emphasizes the consumption of only healthy plant foods, such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, and healthy oils, while reducing the intake of less healthy plant foods as well as animal foods.

But what does an **unhealthy** plant-based diet look like?



- fruit juices
- refined grains (pasta, white rice, and processed breads and cereals)
- potatoes (French fries and potato chips)
- sugar-sweetened beverages

“Eating plants improved really almost everything for me as an athlete. They improved my repair time in between workouts and also sped up my recovery time overnight, and plants, oh man, they greatly enhanced my output and my strength.”

DOTSIE BAUSCH | OLYMPIC CYCLIST

NUTRITION NUTRITION NUTRITION



Harvard Health Publishing. "The Right Plant-Based Diet for You - Harvard Health." Harvard Health, 2018, www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/the-right-plant-based-diet-for-you.

Harvard Health Publishing. "With a little planning, vegan diets can be a healthful choice." Harvard Health, 2020, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/with-a-little-planning-vegan-diets-can-be-a-healthful-choice-2020020618766>.

NHS. "The Vegan Diet." Nhs.uk, 23 Feb. 2022, www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/how-to-eat-a-balanced-diet/the-vegan-diet/.

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WHAT DO WE NEED TO BE FIT?

Learn more about these main food categories!



Fruits and Vegetables



Lean Proteins



Healthy Fats



Whole Grains



Fluids; Water

GET IN 5 SERVINGS OF A VARIETY OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES EVERY DAY



What's a serving? Check it out.

CHOOSE WHOLE GRAINS OVER REFINED WHEN POSSIBLE

OPT FOR FORTIFIED PLANT MILK, YOGURTS, OR ALTERNATIVE DAIRY

EAT NUTS AND SEEDS RICH IN OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS, LIKE WALNUTS, EACH DAY

CHOOSE UNSATURATED/HEALTHY FATS AND OILS EACH DAY



What are healthy fats?

CONSUME FORTIFIED FOODS OR SUPPLEMENTS. VITAMIN D, B12, IODINE, SELENIUM, CALCIUM, AND IRON

DRINK 6-8 CUPS OF WATER EACH DAY

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AVOID the extra sugar, salt, and saturated fats. Try a day of whole-foods instead!



MUSCLE BUILDING

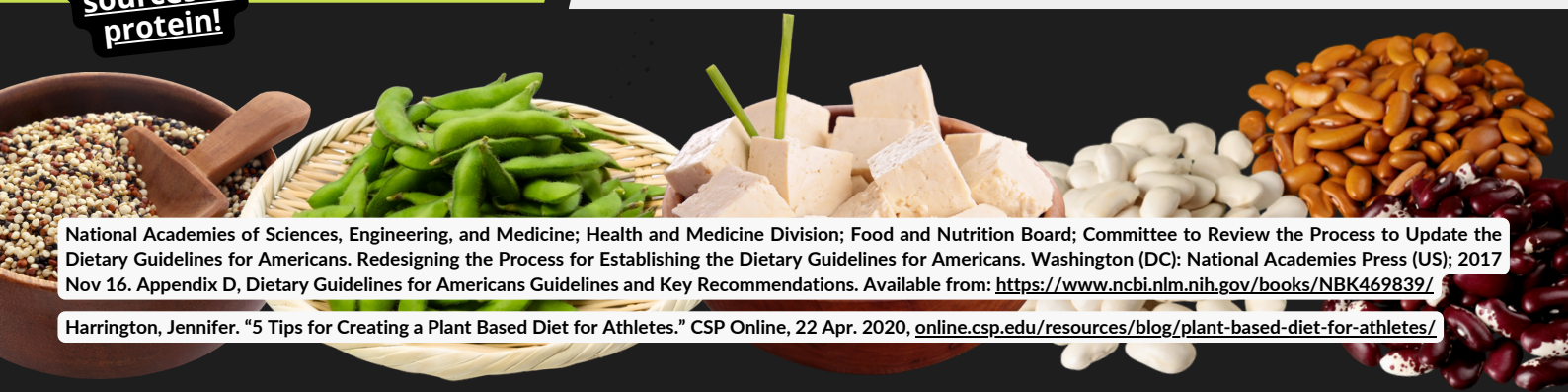
“...protein from a variety of plant foods consumed throughout the day provides enough of all essential amino acids when calorie needs are met.”



Plant-based sources of protein!

“I actually haven't found it that difficult to get high amounts of protein in my meals. You know, as long as I'm conscious about my grocery shopping, I make sure I have high protein sources in my fridge to put with my meals like tofu.”

GAYETANO ALEXANDER | NINJA WARRIOR



National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Health and Medicine Division; Food and Nutrition Board; Committee to Review the Process to Update the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Redesigning the Process for Establishing the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2017 Nov 16. Appendix D, Dietary Guidelines for Americans Guidelines and Key Recommendations. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK469839/>

Harrington, Jennifer. "5 Tips for Creating a Plant Based Diet for Athletes." CSP Online, 22 Apr. 2020, online.csp.edu/resources/blog/plant-based-diet-for-athletes/

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DAILY CARBOHYDRATES

ACTIVITY LEVEL	EXAMPLE OF EXERCISE	INCREASE OF CARBS g/kg of athlete's body weight/day
LIGHT	LOW INTENSITY OR SKILL-BASED ACTIVITIES	3-5
MODERATE	MODERATE EXERCISE PROGRAM (ABOUT 1 HR / DAY)	5-7
HIGH	ENDURANCE PROGRAM (ABOUT 1-3 HR / DAY OF MODERATE TO HIGH INTENSITY EXERCISE.	6-10

PRE AND POST-WORKOUT

Get a combination of the protein and carbs in your body 1 to 4 hours pre-workout and within approximately 60 minutes post-workout.

After a workout, consuming both carbs and protein is essential. Research shows that consuming 20-30 grams of protein post-exercise enhances muscle protein synthesis. However, a low-carb, high-protein diet after working out may cause the body to use protein for energy, possibly affecting hydration levels.



POST WORKOUT SMOOTHIE INSPO

DAILY PROTEIN

GROUP	PROTEIN INTAKE g/kg of athlete's body weight/day
MOST ADULTS	0.8
VEGETARIAN ENDURANCE ATHLETES	1.3 - 1.5
VEGETARIAN STRENGTH ATHLETES	1.7 - 1.8

Titchenal, Alan, et al. "Sports Nutrition." Human Nutrition, pressbooks.oer.hawaii.edu/humannutrition/chapter/fitness-and-health/. Accessed 19 Mar. 2024.

American College of Sports Medicine. "Nutrient Ratios for Strength Training and More | Nutrition FAQs." ASCM, 2021.. <https://www.acsm.org/blog-detail/acsm-certified-blog/2021/01/25/nutrient-ratios-for-strength-training>.

NUTRIENT BREAKDOWN



SOY

- B Vitamins
- Potassium
- Fiber
- Magnesium
- High-Quality Protein



LENTILS

- Helps regulate blood sugar
- Good source of prebiotics

CHICKPEAS

- Protein
- Vitamin C
- Fiber
- Iron

DARK LEAFY GREENS

- Magnesium
- Calcium
- Iron
- Fiber



WHOLE GRAINS

- Fiber
- Magnesium
- Selenium
- Vitamin B



Micronutrient Rainbow

Eating healthy has never been so colorful!
Explore easy ways to eat vitamins and minerals based on the color of plant foods. These...

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MORE



Check out the Educated Choices Program's Micronutrient Rainbow Education Package for more resources and additional nutrition information!

[Visit our video library to watch now!](#)

Harvard School of Public Health. "Straight Talk about Soy." The Nutrition Source, 6 Aug. 2018, www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/soy/.

"Lentils." The Nutrition Source, 28 Oct. 2019, www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/food-features/lentils/.

"Chickpeas for Healthy Eating." Mayo Clinic Health System, www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/chickpeas-healthy-eating.

ES INSPIRING RECIPES IN

BREAKFAST

The Best Vegan Breakfast Burrito

Basic Overnight Oats with Protein Powder



**28G PROTEIN
77G CARBS
39G FATS**

RainbowPlantLife



**17G PROTEIN
43G CARBS
5G FATS**

MyPlantifulCooking

**25G PROTEIN
22G CARBS
16G FATS**



FullOfPlants

PER SLICE

**7G PROTEIN
20G CARBS
8.7 FATS**



MinimalistBaker

LUNCH

Vegan Burgers

Simple Tofu Quiche

DINNER

Smoky Tempeh Burrito Bowls

Cajun-Style Red Beans and Rice



**29G PROTEIN
79G CARBS
21G FATS**

MinimalistBaker



**21G PROTEIN
90G CARBS
7G FATS**

EmilieEats

Avocado Toast with Chipotle Bean Spread

**22G PROTEIN
77G CARBS
18G FATS**

PickUpLimes

Classic Vegan Protein Smoothie

**29G PROTEIN
28G CARBS
8G FATS**

ItDoesntTasteLikeChicken

SNACKS

Try the smoothie recipe on the right after your workout! It offers a perfect blend of carbs and protein to refuel your body!

HEALTHY FATS

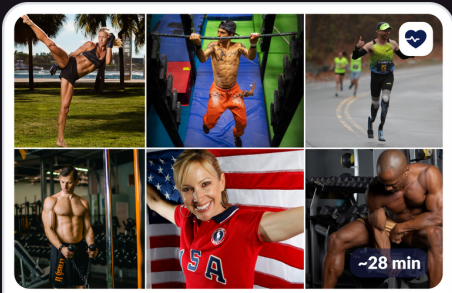
It is important to consume fats that can help with essential energy, fat, (Omega and EPA body, which are both associated with healthy heart and brain).
Some of the richest plant sources of Omega-3 Fats are:
Flax Seeds, Walnuts, Chia Seeds, Hemp Seeds, Avocado, Oils, Nuts, and Seeds.
TWO TYPES OF OMEGA-3 FATS: ALA (CHIA, FLAX, WALNUT, HEMP) AND EPA & DHA (FISH OIL).
If you do not consume these healthy fats, consider a high-quality fish oil supplement.



Find more meal inspiration alongside healthful eating and nutrition statistics and recommendations from leading health organizations with ECP's Lunch Packing Guide.

[Visit ecprogram.org/shareables](http://ecprogram.org/shareables)

RELATED OFFERINGS



Plant-Forward and Powerful

Active individuals rely on food to fuel their bodies. Learn how plants can give you increased energy, strength, and endurance. These material...

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Micronutrient Rainbow

Eating healthy has never been so colorful! Explore easy ways to eat vitamins and minerals based on the color of plant foods. These...

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