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# VEGETARIAN EATING FOR CHILDREN

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Vegetarian diets can be suitable for children if it is well planned.

Special care is needed to meet their nutritional needs for growth and to ensure enough food is eaten due to the bulkiness of vegetarian food and the small stomachs of children.

## So how much do children need?

### Calories

Include regular meals and snacks  
(6-8 times per day)

Include foods which are good sources  
of fat:

- ◆ full cream milk
- ◆ yoghurt
- ◆ cheese
- ◆ fortified soy milk
- ◆ avocado
- ◆ eggs

### Iron

Include high iron foods daily

- ◆ legumes (lentils, baked beans, soy beans)
- ◆ wholemeal bread, rice and pasta  
(especially baby cereal and  
breakfast cereal with added iron)
- ◆ eggs
- ◆ fortified soy milks
- ◆ dried fruit
- ◆ nuts and seed (over 5 years)
- ◆ peanut butter

Include a food rich in vitamin C at each main meal.  
This helps increase iron uptake.

- ◆ oranges/orange juice
- ◆ berry fruits
- ◆ melons
- ◆ pineapple
- ◆ broccoli
- ◆ tomato
- ◆ capsicum
- ◆ cabbage

### Calcium

Include any 3 of the following foods and  
drinks each day -

- ◆ 1 cup cows milk
- ◆ 1 cup fortified soy milk e.g. So Good
- ◆ 1 piece of cheese, matchbox size
- ◆ 200g tub yoghurt

Small amounts of calcium are found in  
green vegies, nuts and dried fruit but it is not  
as readily taken up as in dairy products.  
If your child is regularly not meeting their  
calcium needs a calcium supplement will be  
needed.

**A vitamin B12 supplement  
will be needed if children  
are not consuming any  
dairy foods or fortified soy  
milk each day.**

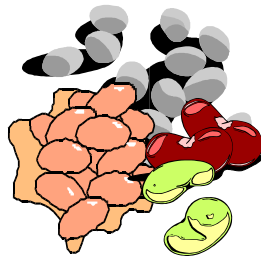
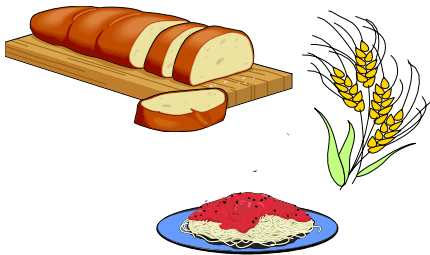


## Protein

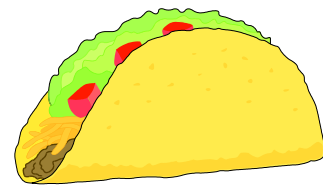
Plant proteins do not contain all the amino acids (building blocks of protein) needed for your growing child.

However by ensuring you have a wide range of different plant proteins each day you can obtain all the essential amino acids needed for growth. This can be done by combining -

Bread, cereals, rice, pasta + Lentils, dried peas, =  
beans



- ◆ Baked beans on toast
- ◆ Rice and bean casserole
- ◆ Bean taco
- ◆ Lentil and vegetable soup with bread



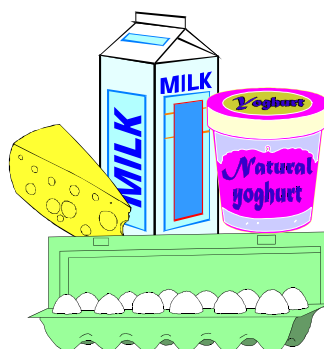
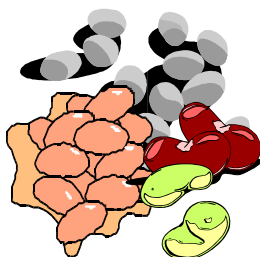
Bread, cereals, rice, pasta + Nuts and seeds, =  
peanuts, walnuts,  
tahini, sesame seeds



- ◆ Peanut butter on toast
- ◆ Pita bread with tahini
- ◆ Weetbix and peanut butter
- ◆ Hommous with dry biscuits

If you include dairy products as part of your vegetarian diet it is much easier to obtain all the essential building blocks.

Breads, cereals, lentils, + Dairy foods and eggs, =  
dried peas and beans, milk, cheese, yoghurt.  
nuts and seeds.



- ◆ Cereal with milk
- ◆ Rice pudding
- ◆ Pasta topped with cheese
- ◆ Cheese sandwich
- ◆ Scrambled eggs on toast
- ◆ Fried rice with egg