

Vegan diets support excellent health

The evidence

Many people grow up thinking of meat and dairy as essential components of a “balanced diet”. Therefore, it comes as a surprise to many that vegan diets support excellent health. They may rightly ask – where is your evidence?

The evidence comes from studies that monitored many thousands of people on different diets, including about 8000 vegans. The death rates of each group were compared with those of regular meat-eaters. Other groups included were vegetarians (who still consumed milk or eggs), occasional meat-eaters and pescetarians (who ate fish but not meat).

All of the groups in these studies showed excellent health, and lived about five years longer than the general population. They were also more health-conscious than the general population, with lower levels of smoking and a healthier diet.

The death rates for all these groups compared with regular meat-eaters ranged from 0.81 (equivalent to living about two years longer) to 1 (no difference).

	Vegans	Other vegetarians	Pescetarians	Occasional meat-eaters
All studies up to 1999	1	0.84	0.82	0.84
Latest US study, 2013	0.85	0.91	0.81	0.92
Latest UK study, 2016	1	0.93	0.91	0.93

None of the groups had higher death rates than the regular meat-eaters. The better results for vegans from the USA may be due to much higher [vitamin B12](#) intakes than the UK vegans.

Choosing the best plant foods

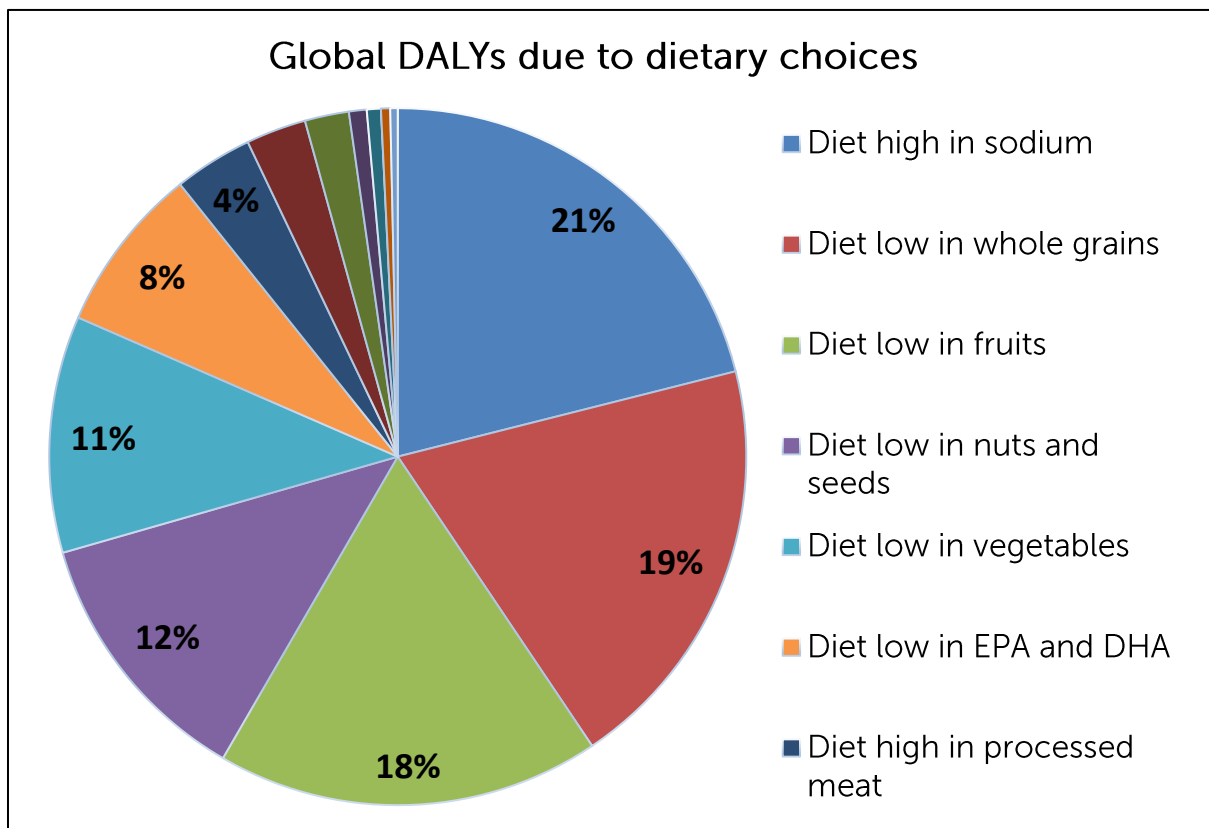
While vegans have already shown that people can thrive on a plant-based diet, there is plenty of room for everyone to maximise their chance of a long and healthy life through making good food choices.

Choosing a vegan diet gives more room for health-promoting plant foods while cutting out carcinogens from meat along with saturated fat and cholesterol. It’s easy to align a vegan diet with the top seven diet recommendations produced by the [Global Burden of Disease Study \(GBDS\)](#). In order of importance worldwide, these are:

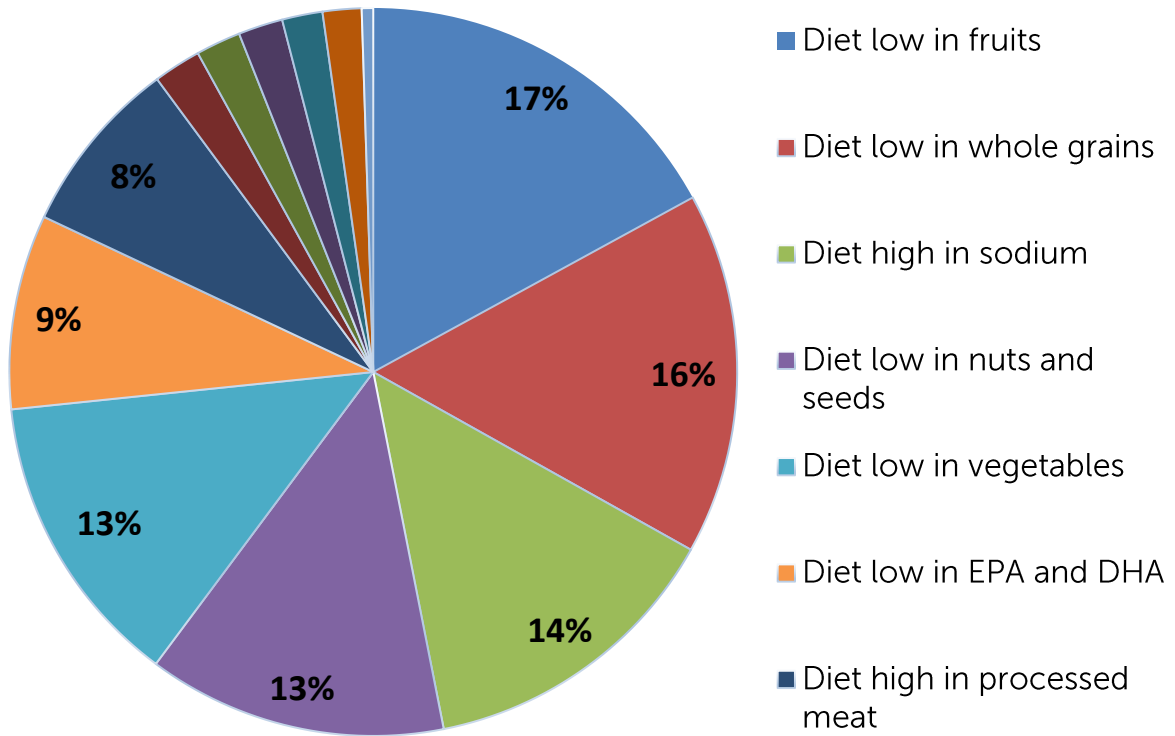
- Avoid excess salt
- Eat 150g of whole grains a day
- Eat 300g of fruit a day
- Eat 25g of nuts and seeds a day
- Eat 500g of vegetables a day
- Get 300mg of long-chain omega-3 fats (EPA and DHA) a day
- Avoid processed meat

According to the [GBDS](#), failing to meet these seven recommendations accounts for about 90% of diet-related ill health (measured by Disability Adjusted Lost Years or DALYs) for people in every major region of the world. The charts below provide more information about DALYs. The key to a healthy diet is choosing the right plant foods.

Our website gives more advice on [nutrition](#). If you're not already vegan, take the [30 Day Vegan Pledge](#) today.



Western European DALYs due to dietary choices



UK DALYs due to dietary choices

