

## Winterise your diet: Vitamin D is key in the cooler months

Temperatures are dropping, and the days are getting shorter. Shorter days mean less sun and vitamin D. So, in addition to pulling out the wool sweaters, we need to winterise our diets to make sure we get the vitamin D we need this season.

### The role of vitamin D

Vitamin controls body functions. It helps bones and teeth absorb calcium. Both calcium and vitamin D are important for bone health and muscle strength, which may explain why we need more as we age and our muscles weaken and the tendency for falls becomes greater. We produce less vitamin D from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays as we age. Vitamin D deficiency causes aching bones.

### The sunshine vitamin

Sunshine is a good source of vitamin D. Our skin produces vitamin D when exposed to UV rays. This process requires direct sun exposure without sunscreen. 10-15 minutes of strong sunshine on your arms and face at least twice a week should meet your vitamin D needs.

### Food sources of vitamin D



Multivitamins, many calcium supplements, and some fortified foods contain vitamin D. Without vitamin D, the body cannot absorb dairy's calcium. Under 50s can get enough vitamin D from two cups of fortified milk. Fatty fish oils and salmon, sardines, and tuna are also good sources of vitamin D, as are fortified soy milks, margarines, cereal, eggs, and orange juice.

To make sure you are getting plenty of vitamin D this winter:

- Enjoy the natural sunlight. A brisk walk outside can lift your mood
- Take your daily multivitamin
- Eat plenty of fish
- Enjoy vitamin D-fortified foods such as low-fat milk, cereal, and orange juice

# Plant-based eating can transform health in surprising ways

DR OPURBO CHOWDHURY

In recent years, there has been a noteworthy shift towards plant-based eating patterns, with more and more people choosing to include more fruits, vegetables, legumes, grains, and nuts into their diets. This trend is not without good reason, as there are numerous health benefits associated with plant-based eating. This article will explore six critical ways in which plant-based diets can support good health and well-being.

### Weight management

One of the most well-known benefits of plant-based diets is their potential to support weight management. Several studies have shown that people who follow plant-based diets tend to have a lower body mass index (BMI) and are less likely to be overweight or obese than those who consume a more traditional diet high in animal products. This may be due in percentage to the statistic that plant-based diets are typically high in fibre and low in calories, which can aid with weight control. Additionally, plant-based foods are often more filling than animal-based foods, which may help to reduce overall caloric intake.

### Heart health

Eating a plant-based diet may also support heart health. Plant-based diets are rich in antioxidants, which can support to shield against oxidative stress and inflammation, two key drivers of heart disease. Plant-based diets are also high in fibre, which has been revealed to decrease cholesterol levels and improve blood pressure. Moreover, plant-based diets are low in saturated fat, a significant risk factor for heart disease.

### Diabetes management

Plant-based diets may also be helpful for those looking to manage their diabetes. Several studies have shown



that plant-based diets can progress blood sugar control and lessen the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. This may be partly because plant-based diets are often rich in fibre and low in unhealthy fats, which can help regulate blood sugar levels. Besides, plant-based diets are often high in antioxidants and other phytochemicals exposed to have anti-inflammatory effects, which can be beneficial for those with diabetes.

### Cancer prevention

A plant-based diet may also protect against certain types of cancer. Many plant-based foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and legumes, are rich in antioxidants and other phytochemicals that have been shown to have anticancer properties. In addition, plant-based diets tend to be low in animal protein, which has been related to an amplified risk of certain types of cancer, such as colon, breast, and prostate cancer.

### Improved kidney function

Plant-based diets may also be beneficial for those with kidney disease. Some studies have shown that plant-based diets can improve kidney function and slow the progression of kidney disease in people with kidney failure. This

may be partly because plant-based diets are often low in protein, which can help reduce the burden on the kidneys. Also, plant-based diets are often rich in antioxidants and other phytochemicals that may have protective effects on the kidneys.

### Better digestive health

Plant-based diets may also support better digestive health. Plant-based foods are rich in fibre, essential for maintaining the health of the digestive system. Fibre helps bulk up the stool, which can help avoid constipation and regular bowel movements. Furthermore, plant-based diets are often high in prebiotics, which are fibres that help nourish the beneficial bacteria that live in the gut. This can help to promote the growth of healthy bacteria and

Plant-based diets have a lower environmental impact than diets heavy in animal products, as they require fewer natural resources and produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions. Changeover a plant-based diet can be a delicious and healthy choice for both individuals and the planet.

The writer is a physician in the UK.  
E-mail: opurbo.chowdhury@gmail.com



HAVE A NICE DAY

## Wisdom for inner peace

DR RUBAIUL MURSHED

What was Socrates' most famous saying? Some say, "Know thyself" and some mention, "There is only one good, knowledge, and one evil, ignorance." Socrates taught us that people should care less about their bodies and possessions and more about their souls, saying, "Wealth does not bring goodness, but goodness brings wealth."

Most of us are becoming so materialistic in today's fast-paced and stressful world that the definition of peace and happiness becomes confusing to the younger generation. Sometimes they cannot differentiate between internal peace and external peace. Internal peace represents an individual's peace, while external peace represents peace in the surroundings and society which may or may not be real.

Fake happiness and peace outside may sabotage inner peace. Most of the time, these are things like worrying, taking things personally, having unrealistic expectations, and becoming jealous. At the end of the day, these elements will combine to form a silent killer known as 'stress', that will turn to anxiety and depression. The power of inner peace calms our mind and allows us to see our path much more clearly and helps us focus on our goals.

Happiness comes from inner peace. The main form of mental training is helping others with kindness, along with forgiveness and gratitude. Contemplating has many mental health benefits, such as reducing stress, anxiety, and depression. But we must first change our mindsets to be more helpful and adjustable, to find our own destinations of tranquility that we seek.

E-mail: rubaiulmurshed@shomman.org



## Want to nap better? JUST DRINK COFFEE!



According to the Japanese, they conducted a survey where people took coffee naps, i.e. by consuming 200 mg of coffee and then take a 20-minute power nap or rest. These people felt more alert and did well on their tests. But isn't drinking coffee supposed to keep you wide awake? When one consumes coffee, the caffeine kicks in and clears the adenosine, a molecule in the brain that triggers alertness. So, when Adenosine levels increase, they make one more tired. Therefore, napping at this time helps to flush out the adenosine and drinking coffee, reduces the effect of the molecule further. This results in better naps!

## Giving smartphones to kids? Think twice!

PROF M KARIM KHAN

As a Paediatrician I often find parents coming with their kids aged between 3-5 years having a problem with conversation, lack of concentration, social relationship, sleep disturbances, irritable, not interested in outdoor games, books or teachers, etc. On query, parents inform that there was no problem with pregnancy, delivery and after delivery. All parameters were OK but recently they noticed the problem as mentioned earlier.

Unfortunately we all are running after technology without knowing its short-term and long-term side effects. Well, dear readers, it is true in almost every family. Smartphone is a smart device beyond doubt and it is very helpful as well, but its excessive use can produce sometimes irreversible damage to our kids.

Smartphones, TV, tabs, computers are essential commodities now a days. We are accustomed to use them and unfortunately we cannot think to pass a single day without using them. Children learn mostly from their parents' activities, they keenly observe what their parents are doing. They follow them and try to do the same, considering that this is perhaps the ideal activities, otherwise dad or mom would not do that.

Smartphones need to be handled smartly, purposefully and when

required, but it does not mean that you have to use it hours together or very frequently. If you go on doing that, you will be addicted. Similar things may happen to our beloved kids as well. Language delay, lack of concentration, problems in conversation, decrease in sleep, poor outcome in schools, poor appetite, decrease cognitive functions all have got some association with over use of smartphones, TV, computers, tabs.

Please don't use smartphones at



home for a longer time in presence of kids and don't allow them to use the above devices regularly until they are 15 years or above. Offering smartphones to kids at the age of two years to keep them busy and quiet is very injudicious and may be very harmful. They become soon addicted to it and glued their eyes on screen all the time. And finally there will be delay in development of language, social relationship;

they may become introvert, with decrease sleep, poor appetite, lack of concentration etc.

My humble request to all the parents - please don't offer smartphones, tabs etc. to your kids and my another request to parents, please refrain yourselves from using these devices longer time in front of your kids.

In France, President Emmanuel Macron has addressed the issue on a nation-wide scale. Macron has banned smartphones and tablets

from all schools. The phone ban will apply to all pupils in France up to the age of 15.

I do also prefer to have such decision in our country as well, otherwise we will not get the expected productive outcome from our kids. Wishing all our kids happy and healthy.

The author is a Professor of Paediatrics at Community Based Medical College, Mymensingh. E-mail: mmukhan@gmail.com

Appointment  
02 22 22 62 466  
**10666**

# Save Your Heart!

Dr. Sayedur Rahman Khan

Dr. Rezaul Hassan

Dr. Mirza Abul Kalam Mohiuddin

**OPEN HEART SURGERY**

Starts from **BDT 2.5 LAC**

Dr. Afreed Jahan

Dr. Samsun Nahar

Dr. Tunaggina Afrin Khan

**CAG ANGIOGRAM**

Starts from **BDT 20 THOUSAND**

**PTCA STENTING**

Starts from **BDT 95 THOUSAND**

United Healthcare brands