

## Fitness - Is Non-Vegetarian Food Unhealthy

If you are a pure non-vegetarian, you will probably raise a hue and cry at the thought of turning vegetarian! But the truth is that meat of any kind is tough on your smart cells. If Nature intended you to be a non-vegetarian, she would have equipped you with claws, and sharp pointed teeth to tear into any flesh; given you acidic saliva to digest the animal protein; a round stomach with the capacity to produce plenty of hydrochloric acid, fewer intestines to shorten the process of digesting the meat so that you could expel it before it putrefies inside; a liver that could dispel more uric acid than it does. Instead, we have hands with moveable fingers that can delicately pluck and peel fruits; blunt teeth and molars that crush and grind; alkaline saliva to digest plant protein; a stomach that produces small quantities of hydrochloric acid; more intestines that hold on to the food and give time for your smart cells to extract the required nutrients, a liver that can expel small amounts of uric acid. Look around at your circle of friends. If you find one of them is suffering from gout, you can be sure he is a heavy red-meat eater. You can almost bet that he eats salami or sausages for breakfast, a steak for lunch and meat for dinner. Then, one day, after a leisurely weekend of imbibing an overdose of scotch-on-the-rocks and liberal helpings of cold cuts as hors d' oeuvres, and a plate piled with Mutton Moghlai, he would have slept feeling well-dined and content. Only to be jolted awake with his big toe pounding with pain. The gout had struck! What happened His prolonged meat-eating habit had put an overload on his liver. The excess uric acid had no place to go in his system, so it turned into crystals and settled in the joint of his big toe - and, pow! (What does his doctor recommend To stay off meat and eat only vegetables, at least until the inflammation recedes.) The onset of gout is only one side of the unhealthy coin. Meat is so high in indigestible fat content that it clogs up your arteries and can lead to a heart problem. It gives you no energy because though it contains carbohydrates, its also has undigestible animal protein and a high content of fat. That's the reason you feel heavy after a meaty meal. In fact, your smart cells sweat working overtime to digest the meat and use up all the carbohydrates and energy in knocking the meat into digestible shape! Meat also has neither fibre nor healthy plant protein. The animal protein is tough on your smart cells and turns toxic - turning your insides into mess. You get indigestion, bad breath and a heartburn. The toxies load your immune system and also make you vulnerable to disease. Lastly, look at your mental make-up. When you see a plump goat, do you get that predatory gleam in your eye that makes you stalk and kill it Or if you've been to a sea-food restaurant which has a large aquarium filled with lobsters and are asked to pick one for dinner haven't you turned away with a shudder Okay, you might argue, I don't see the live specimen when eating it. Of course, you don't. You are just habituated to eating meat. But, remember, ultimately meat is dangerous to your health. However, if you just cannot do without it, we suggest avoid red meats - beef, mutton, pork -completely and go in for lean meats like chicken and fish. This way, at least you won't be overstraining your smart cells while satisfying your taste buds. Even a chicken cooked in an oil-less masata, however, has enough fat to knock your smart cells out and make you put on weight. So, cook your chicken curry the previous day and refrigerate it overnight. The next afternoon skim the thick layer of fat that has coagulated on the surface and then heat it before serving. This way, at least, you are reducing your fat intake, Along with your non-vegetarian dish, pile your plate with plenty of vegetables so that you don't gorge on the meat alone. And eggs They are not really worth including in your meals, for the yolk is high in fat and cholesterol. Which means that eating only the white albumen is best. In any case, they contain enough sulphur to strain your liver and kidneys. So, if you must. have an egg only once in ten days so as not to 'eggsasperate' your taste buds! The culture of eating cooked food is deeply embedded in us. But we cannot ignore the value of raw foods. Make sure that your thali has plenty of salad and sprouts. For, the time taken by the body to digest and absorb various foods is: 13 hours - raw vegetables, fruits, sprouts. 24 hours - cooked vegetables and pulses. 72 hours - non-vegetarian and fried food. Next to the - raw state, steaming is best. So is boiling, provided you do it in minimum water. Deep frying damages the nutritional value and the oil makes you fat, and raises your blood cholestrol level. Finally, the word 'vegetable' springs from the Latin vegetus meaning fresh and full of life. It is what our scriptures called pranic shakti, meaning life-force, depicting strength and energy. Do ring in these little changes in your lifestyle. The two Es - exercising and eating right - will promote more than health. When you feel good about yourself, you will enjoy healthy relationships, a richer life. Fine-tune your mental dynamics. Don't ask yourself "Will this taste good" Rather, ask, "Will this taste good to my body's smart cells" In that question lies your best answer.

## About the Author

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