

Helping Your Clients Navigate Plant-Based Eating - Exploring Clinical Approaches and the New Dietary Guidelines

Webinar Questions Answered by Sherene Chou, MS, RDN

- What is your opinion on “plant based” meat alternatives for health? Given that soy protein isolate is not optimal for us to consume and many meat and cheese alternative products are not health-promoting.
 - Many plant-based meat alternatives are historically used in traditional cultural cuisine. Depending on your client, overall diet pattern, culture and preferences, I believe they can have a place in eating patterns. Looking at the dietary guidelines, a health promoting meal consists of a combination of fruits, vegetables, grains and traditional “protein” category foods. This can be a combination of legumes, nuts, seeds, and meat alternatives in a vegetarian, vegan pattern.
- Why did they say only soy beverages substitute for milk/dairy? Other ones have added protein, calcium etc.
 - Yes, other plant milks do have added protein, but not all. Soy is consistently recognized as the alternative, which is readily available and accessible to most. Others may have fortified nutrients like calcium, but most plant milks don’t have comparable protein. Pea milk and others are other alternatives, but not always accessible.
- In MyPlate, when counting beans and peas as protein group, it says 1/4 cup is considered 1 oz equivalent. The amount of protein in 1/4 cup beans and peas is significantly lower than 1 oz equivalent of meat/fish. Do you think the goal for MyPlate protein group (let's say 5 oz eq/day) is not appropriate for vegan/vegetarian people? If so, how do you recommend adjusting it?
 - There are adjustments depending on the individual. [See the full pattern and recommendations here.](#) There is more than the protein group. The foods are broken out into categories.
- Why does production of dark chocolate use so many resources? Surprising that this was at the top of the list!
 - Here’s a [brief article](#) from World Wildlife on deforestation and child labor. If accessible, look for Fair Trade or Rainforest Alliance certified brands.
- When promoting the inclusion of plant-based menus into our facility - what term is best received - plant based or plant forward?
 - Depending on the facility and direction. Plant-based menus make a clear distinction that there are plant-based options available there. Other food items can be categorized as plant-forward, but plant-based allows for a more clear definition depending on the shifts/options your organization wants to provide. The examples in the presentation all focused on plant-based.
- What type of deficiencies, if any are possible for those when switching from a meat inclusive diet to a plant based or vegan diet? What are important things to remember when transitioning diets?

- Like any diet, making sure you're getting nutrients from all the food groups. Usually switching to a plant forward diet can help people increase fruits and vegetables. Only 1 in 10 Americans eat the daily recommended amount of fruits and vegetables irregardless of diet. Supplements to consider B12, vitamin D, calcium, iodine. For specifics, please see previous presentation.
- What criteria determined the GLOBAL FRAMEWORK CONSENSUS?
 - Papers from experts around the world with common themes shared with UN Sustainable Development Goals. Please see slide 18 in blue to see global frameworks.
- What is the website for the FREE Menu of Change info?
 - <https://www.menusofchange.org/>
- What is the consensus on B12 supplementation for vegan diets?
 - It is necessary and preferably from a reliable source like a B12 supplement.
- Besides beans (that may cause GI discomfort for some), tofu, tempeh, seitan, what are some other protein sources for Vegans to eat? Understand protein vegan beverages but looking for sources to eat not drink.
 - To help with GI discomfort, one can start with smaller legumes or split lentils. Seitan does not contain legumes, it is wheat based. Whole grains like quinoa or whole grain breads, nuts, seeds - hemp, flax, chia, yogurts are some to consider.
- While plant-based diets have been seen to be very sustainable and health promoting, do you have any concerns with meat alternatives/analogs such as Beyond Meat and Impossible Meat, being a GMO product/processed food as individuals transition to a more plant-based diet?
 - Many plant-based meat alternatives are historically used in traditional cultural cuisine. Depending on your client, overall diet pattern, culture and preferences, I believe they can have a place in eating patterns. Looking at the dietary guidelines, a health promoting meal consists of a combination of fruits, vegetables, grains and traditional "protein" category foods. This can be a combination of legumes, nuts, seeds, and meat alternatives in a vegetarian, vegan pattern. [Article for specifics on sustainability.](#)
- What are the best recommendations for protein sources that are non-starchy? Such as if someone is needing to moderate carb intake, or someone is looking for more "texture" to their foods.
 - tofu and tempeh
- Has there been an analysis of the environmental impact of prepackaged and premade meat substitutes, such as the Impossible Burger, Beyond Meat, etc.? Where does it fit within the environmental sustainability ladder and how does it compare to actual meat products?
 - [Article summary](#)
- Can you please tell me the source /resource for redefining protein?
 - [Resource here](#)
- What are your thoughts on plant-based diet on children (during their growing years)?
 - The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics position paper states that appropriately planned vegetarian and vegan diets are healthful and nutritionally adequate throughout all

stages of life. In fact, there are a few public schools that are completely vegetarian in NY. Here are some resources <https://www.vndpg.org/resources/vegetarian-dietitian-resources>

- Do you recommend a multivitamin/mineral supplement in general for all plant-based diets?
 - It depends on the diet pattern and lifestyle. Please see my previous presentation <https://healthcare.orgain.com/webinar/course/view/id/thriving> for supplements that might be needed.
- What do you tell clients to do if they have problems with flatulence when eating plant-based diets?
 - [Tips from article](#)
- Any suggestions for people who are following a low FODMAP diet that want to follow a vegan eating pattern?
 - I recommend seeing a dietitian who specializes in FODMAP that can help adapt a vegan pattern <https://findanrd.eatright.org/>
- Any recommendation for a resource for teens interested in becoming vegan?
 - <https://www.vndpg.org/resources/vegetarian-dietitian-resources>
 - <https://www.vrg.org/teen/>
- What about concerns with soy products for the breast cancer patient?
 - From American Institute of Cancer Research - “Consistent findings from population studies indicate no increased risk for breast cancer survivors who consume soyfoods. In fact, limited evidence shows the potential for greater overall survival and perhaps decreased recurrence, among women a year or more after diagnosis who include moderate amounts of soy.” [Learn more here.](#)