

Viva Veganism!

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What do vegans eat? According to Dr. Charles "Snuffy" Myers vegans eat grains, cereals, legumes, vegetables, fruits, berries and nuts but no meat, fish, dairy products or eggs. A vegan or vegetarian consumes three times as much folic acid as an omnivore, but the vegan diet does not provide enough vitamin B12, zinc or creatine. Many dishes from the Mediterranean diet are vegan. Mark Bittman, who writes the "Flexitarian" column for *The New York Times*, describes himself as a "part-time vegan." He eats a vegan breakfast and lunch, then becomes an omnivore at dinner. If you are interested in experimenting with becoming an occasional vegan, you will find 3 recipes in this column, one for breakfast and two for lunch to try.

Breakfast: Hoecakes With Fruit

(adapted from Mark Bittman's "The Flexitarian" column, The NYTimes, September, 18, 2013)

A hoecake (also called a johnnycake) is a cornmeal flatbread that was an early American staple food. These hoecakes are substantial and fill the kitchen with a delicious aroma, perfect for a cold winter morning. My late husband, Mike Margolis, changed the original recipe by eliminating the salt, adding ground spices, and expanding the list of suggested fruits.

1½ cups cornmeal (fine or medium grind)

cinnamon and nutmeg to taste

1½ cups boiling water, more as needed

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 cup chopped fresh or frozen fruit (berries, apples, pears, plums, bananas, mango, or pineapple)

- Heat oven to 200 degrees. Combine cornmeal and spices in a medium bowl. Gradually pour in boiling water, whisking constantly. Let mixture sit until cornmeal absorbs water, 5 to 10 minutes. Stir in half the oil and a little more boiling water, a little at a time, until batter is pourable. Fold in fruit.
- Put a large skillet or griddle, preferably cast-iron or nonstick, over medium heat. When a few drops of water dance on the surface, add a thin film of remaining oil. Working in batches, spoon in batter, making any size cakes you like; they will be thinner than pancakes. Cook until bubbles appear and burst on the tops, and the undersides are golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes; turn and cook on other side until golden, another 2 or 3 minutes. Transfer to warm oven and continue with next batch, adding more oil to skillet if necessary. Serve warm with syrup, jam or compote.

Makes 4 servings.

Radish, Lemon, and Mint Salad

(straight from Snuffy Myer's *The New Prostate Cancer Nutrition Book*)

Dr. Myers recommends this dish for picnics or events in which food needs to sit before it is eaten. A Watermelon Radish is a large round root vegetable related to the turnip and horseradish family, with a crisp texture and a mild to sweet peppery flavor.

5 Watermelon Radishes, halved, then sliced into thin disks
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 lemons, 1 zested and segmented and 1 juiced
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt, to taste
8 mint leaves, cut in very thin ribbons

Juice 1 lemon and set aside. Zest the remaining lemon and segment it by dividing the meat from the pith of the fruit. Slice the segments with a knife so they are the size of a nickel. Mince the garlic, and add it to the reserved lemon juice with the zest and segments. Season this mixture well with salt. Allow the garlic and lemon to sit at room temperature for 20 minutes to allow the flavors to develop. Meanwhile, halve the watermelon radishes and slice them into paper-thin disks with a knife or mandolin. Place the radish slices in a stainless bowl. After 20 minutes, whisk the extra virgin olive oil into the garlic-lemon base. Pour this vinaigrette over the radishes, and toss the ingredients until the radish slices are coated with the vinaigrette. If necessary, adjust the seasoning with more salt. Slice thin ribbons of mint and fold it into the salad just before serving.

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Herbed Italian White Beans (from AICR's RECIPE CORNER)

White beans or cannellini are packed with nutrients such as folate, iron, and manganese. They are also an excellent source of fiber, which research suggests may help reduce the risk for colorectal cancer. The beans are a great meatless protein source. Because this recipe included nutrient information, I'm offering it as is. When I prepared it last evening, however, I made some changes to increase the flavor. I added some cinnamon, garam masala, and coriander to the oil as it heated. Next I added a cut up red bell pepper and 2 slices of onion to the oil and spice mixture and sautéed for about 10 minutes. Finally, in the final few minutes of simmering I threw in several large handfuls of fresh baby spinach leaves.

4 teaspoons olive oil

1 tablespoon garlic, crushed or to taste

¼ teaspoon dried sage

1 (14 or 15 ounce) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed

2 medium tomatoes, chopped or 2 cups chopped canned plum tomatoes

Salt and pepper to taste

2 tablespoons fresh basil, shredded

2 teaspoons red wine vinegar or to taste

Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic and sage. Saute about 2 minutes. Add drained, rinsed beans and tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper. Stir gently to combine. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer about 10 minutes. Uncover pan and remove from heat. Immediately add basil and vinegar and serve.

Nutrient Info: 140 calories; 6g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 16g carbs; 5g protein; 5g dietary fiber; 35mg sodium