

You must be able to know and understand the reasons why some people have to follow a special diet and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of their nutritional needs or deficiencies. **You should** be able to explain that some people change their diet due to food choice linked to religious teachings and understand the following key terms.

Key words: vegetarian, vegan, lacto-vegetarian, religious beliefs (Hindu, Christian, Jew, Muslim, Seventh Day Adventists) kosher, halal.

There are many different types of vegetarians. All vegetarians don't eat meat, poultry, game, and fish or slaughter-by products such as gelatine or animal fats. There are many reasons why people choose to become a vegetarian, some for ethical reasons as they believe it is wrong to slaughter animals for food or because they are opposed to cruelty and suffering that is inflicted on animals reared for food. Some for religious beliefs - many are concerned about the environment, believing that meat production should not be economic. For some, it may be purely that they dislike the taste or are under peer pressure to follow the regime. Others will believe that there are health advantages to a vegetarian diet because it is low in saturated fat and high in starchy carbohydrate, non-starch polysaccharide (fibre) and essential vitamin and minerals. Generally, vegetarians do not consume any meat, poultry, game, fish or shellfish. Types of vegetarian include:

Lacto-vegetarians who will eat dairy products but not eggs, poultry, meat, fish or sea food.

Lacto-ovo vegetarians who will eat egg and dairy products but not poultry, meat, fish or sea food.

Vegans who will not eat any foods from animal origin, even honey.

A vegetarian *has to* ensure that their bodies receive a plentiful supply of iron and all the essential amino acids that they do not get from traditional sources. Vegetarians will often combine two or more low biological value proteins together or consume Quorn, tofu etc. as an alternative. Vitamin B12 supplements should be taken as this is mostly found in meat sources, unless a lot of fortified cereals, soy and tofu are consumed. Suitable sources of iron can be taken from nuts, dark green leafy vegetables and pulses.

Religious beliefs

Many religions have dietary rules that can affect their choice of food. They may have to choose or avoid foods depending on their religious beliefs and principles.

Judaism: Jewish food must be kosher. This word means permitted which includes a method of slaughtering and preparation according to strict Jewish laws. Jews do not eat pork, bacon, ham, fish without scales, shellfish or eels. Orthodox Jews do not eat meat, drink milk or have milk products (mother and child) at the same time or cooked together e.g. lasagne or vegetables cooked in butter. Separate equipment must be used for milk and meat. Milk and milk products are usually eaten at breakfast only and avoided at other meals. Meat must be kosher (or kashrut) and prepared in accordance with Jewish dietary guidelines. Fish and meat cannot be served together. Processed food must be prepared in the presence of the Rabbi. Kosher kitchens maintain different sets of utensils and equipment for different tasks and the equipment cannot be mixed.

Buddhism: There are no forbidden foods. Buddhism teaches that it is wrong to kill, so most Buddhists become vegetarian to avoid killing animals. All Buddhists avoid the consumption of alcohol.

Hinduism: Hindus do not eat beef. They believe that the cow is a sacred animal and cannot be eaten. Many are vegetarian, but some do eat lamb, poultry and/or fish. Most people who practice the Hindu religion don't eat meat from animals or any food or food product that has involved the taking of life, due to their belief in 'Karma'. Therefore, they are vegetarian, but this is not compulsory. Prohibited animal products tend to vary from one country or region to the next. Pork is also sometimes restricted or avoided.

Dairy products including milk, butter and yoghurt may be eaten because no animal is killed during the collection. Foods such as tea, coffee, alcohol and garlic are thought to inhibit the Hindu's quest for spiritual enlightenment. They are therefore avoided or restricted. Some devout Hindus observe fasting on special occasions as a mark of respect to Gods or as part of their penance.

Islam: Muslims do not eat pork (pork products including lard) as they believe that the pig is an unclean animal. Meat has to be halal (permitted) - slaughtered following Muslim law. They do not eat fish without scales or shellfish. They do not drink alcohol or eat any food containing alcohol. Food products must not contain gelatine from an animal source which is not Halal meat. Islam also prohibits certain other items, including foods made from animal fat. The Qur'an outlines the conditions of halal, which foods can be eaten, and which foods are forbidden. During Ramadan, at October time, individuals fast during the sunlight hours and the fast is broken each night after prayers.

Christians: They do not have any restrictions. Some Catholics and Orthodox Christians avoid meat on Fridays and eat fish each Friday instead. They also fast during Lent. Seventh Day Adventists avoid caffeine and don't eat flesh such as pork, beef and lamb. Many are lacto-ovo vegetarians.

Sikhs must not eat **beef**, or beef products, most Sikhs are **vegetarian**. It is also forbidden to eat meat from animals slaughtered according to religious guidelines, and therefore Sikhs do not eat halal or kosher meat.