

Vegan and Pregnant – The First Trimester

Congratulations on your positive pregnancy! Now it's time to eat protein for your baby's development!

Protein: This is the developing" period for your beautiful fetus and essential amino acids are a must. Amino acids are the building blocks of the human body, supporting development of bones, blood cells, brains, muscles etc. Whilst protein comes easily to the carnivores it can be harder for vegetarians and vegans to manage their intake. I recommend that you ensure a third of each of your meals – however small is protein based. The table below offers vegan-friendly proteins for vegans and vegetarian protein for the lacto's!

Vegan & Veggie Proteins	
Legumes	Split or green peas, chick peas, black, navy, kidney beans, pinto beans, lentils
Nuts	Great for snacks, sandwiches, and salad toppings or add to juices and smoothies or make into a butter or milk. Peanuts, walnuts, almonds, Brazils, macademia, chestnut, cob nuts, cashews, pistachios all offer protein and essential fats. Soak nuts overnight in water to support digestion
Seeds	Fresh sprouting seeds are a power packed form of protein as are the dried variety. Include Sunflowers, linseeds, flaxseed, chia, fenugreek, pea shoots, mustard seeds, radish seeds, aduki and alfafa, linseeds, flaxseeds, hemp seed etc
Whole grains	Yes they are carbs as well but they offer a protein boost (plus baby-friendly B vitamins, including folate) from whole wheat, wild and brown rice, bulgur, millet, quinoa (a particularly potent protein source) and cous cous
Pea Protein Isolate, Hemp Protein powder, Soy and Rice Bran powder	For concentrated protein power, fortify anything you're cooking or baking or add to pregnancy truffles or protein bars, juices and smoothies. Loads of different flavours and forms on the market – I like Pulsin' and Sun Warrior, Nutri Advanced, Vega
Soy	A little contentious – you either love it or hate it but if you want to eat it then ensure it is GM free. Soy chips, soybeans (roasted as snacks or steamed — edamame — perfect in soups, rice dishes, and salads), tempeh (made from fermented soybean), TVP (textured vegetable protein) Tofu (the soft variety is great for soups, sauces, and shakes, the extra firm is perfect for stir-fries and grilling), Miso (a salty fermented paste of soybean combined with rice, wheat, or barley is used to make miso soup or soy "meats"
Sea Algae and Spirulina	Concentrated protein power but ensure you use a pure product for optimum safety. Due to its high phytonutrient and chlorophyll values I recommend that you do not over use during the 1 st trimester – after all it is used as a detoxification tool
Very Lacto Veggie Protein Options	Cow Dairy, Eggs, Cheese,

The Essential Fats:

Vital for the baby's development throughout the pregnancy. Fatty acids have an essential role in normal brain function – there are many studies linking DHA to normal brain development in the unborn child. Other functions of fatty acids and a suitable ratio of omega 3 and 6 oils include the maintenance of eye health, cell membrane integrity, skin health, liver function and

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joint mobility. It is challenging to find the correct EPA/DHA omega balance from vegan sources so I recommend you take a supplement to support your pregnancy during this time in addition to taking organic flaxseed oil or ground seeds for its high omega 3 content.

The brands Viridian and Cytoplan both other vegan sources of essential fats – DHA/EPA taken from algae

The Other Essentials

Calcium **For making the baby's bones and teeth!** For non dairy dietary sources of calcium, turn to dairy free milks fortified with calcium, green leafy vegetables, seaweeds, sesame seeds, almonds, calcium-coagulated tofu and tempeh. If you are a lacto veggie and eat dairy such as yoghurt and cheese you can obtain calcium from these foods.

Magnesium **For bone growth and muscle development** – found in leafy vegetables, Epsom Salts

Iron **For baby's development of normal cognitive function.** As someone who sticks to plant foods, you'll have to double your efforts to pump up the iron. Foods like ground flaxseeds have a high iron content as do beans, soy products, oat bran, barley, pumpkin seeds, dried fruits (especially apricots), spinach, seaweed, Jerusalem artichokes, and blackstrap molasses. The sea vegetables also offer iron – spirulina, wheatgrass, barley grass all have some iron in them, but you'll also need to take an iron supplement to make sure you're meeting your daily quota (actually, it's recommended that all pregnant women take an iron supplement after week 20 — or earlier if iron stores are low)

Vitamin B and B12 **For the production of red blood cells during pregnancy.** Your mission as a pregnant vegan is to make sure you're getting enough vitamin B12 in your diet — a vitamin found only in foods that come from animals. Vitamin B12, which partners with folic acid to help with proper fetal development and is also important for the formation of red blood cells and for building genetic material, is an important nutrient that you shouldn't be without. I recommend a B12 or B Complex and prenatal supplement. Foods include: B12-fortified soy milk, fortified cereals, nutritional yeast, and fortified meat substitutes.

Vitamin D **Normal development and growth of bones and immune health**
You'll have to depend on a supplement for this and at least 10 minutes in the sun without SPF each day (sun helps your body produce vitamin D)

you will also need Iodine, Probiotics, Folate/Folic Vitamin C, Zinc, Selenium Beta Carotene, Vitamin K **These nutrients all help towards protecting your fetus, supporting its immune system and keeping them healthy. Whilst you may obtain these from food groups a good multi pregnancy care formula will ensure your intake**

Disclaimer: This handout is meant for information only. It is important to discuss your individual requirements with a qualified health practitioner.

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