

# Plant-Rich Eating Quick Reference 12/22



## Health Benefit



### Cardiovascular Disease:

- 24% reduction in ischemic heart disease mortality rates<sup>5</sup>
- Decrease LDL by 19-32% (equivalent to a statin)<sup>6,7,8</sup>
- Decrease anginal symptoms & help resolve disease<sup>3</sup>
- Decrease systolic blood pressure by 5-26mmHg <sup>6,7,9,10</sup>
- Reduce the need for hypertension medications<sup>6,7</sup>

### Diabetes:

- Decrease HbA1c by 1-2%<sup>8,12,13,14</sup>
- Reduce the need for up to 2 diabetes medications <sup>4,8,10</sup>
- Improve emotional wellbeing & quality of life with diabetes<sup>15</sup>
- Conversely, low plant-based index scores confer a 12-23% **increase** in Type 2 diabetes risk<sup>11</sup>

### Cancer Risk & Treatment:

- Decrease symptoms related to cancer treatment while working synergistically with cancer treatments<sup>28</sup>
- Decrease risk of breast and colorectal cancers and cancer mortality<sup>24-27</sup>

### Mental Health:

- Decrease depression risk by 32%<sup>16</sup>
- Decrease risk of and mortality from dementia<sup>17,18</sup>
- Reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety, and PTSD <sup>19,20</sup>

### Osteoporosis:

- Protect against the development of osteoporosis<sup>30</sup>

### Gastrointestinal Health:

- Decrease bloating, heartburn, gas, constipation, and diarrhea<sup>31</sup>

### Liver & Kidney Health:

- Reduce risk and slow progression of Chronic Kidney Disease and Non-alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease<sup>32-41</sup>

### Overall Health:

- Reduce overall mortality by 10% by switching 3% of protein from meat to plants<sup>42</sup>
- Improve weight status, energy metabolism, & systemic inflammation<sup>44</sup>

All references for this document can be found on our Plant-Rich Eating Guide:  
(<https://docs.hamiltonfht.ca/dsweb/Get/Document-119928/Plant-Rich%20Prescribing%20Guide.pdf>).

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## Planetary Benefit

### Animal agriculture is responsible for:

- 14.5% of all human-caused climate change<sup>37</sup>
- 70% of all global surface & groundwater use<sup>39</sup>
- 80% of global agricultural land use<sup>40</sup>
- 82% of antibiotic use in Canada<sup>41</sup>
- 40% of global methane emissions (traps 30x more atmospheric heat than CO<sub>2</sub>)<sup>38</sup>

## Nutritional Considerations

**General Recommendation:** Consider a multivitamin with minerals supplement to help meet nutritional needs.

### Additional supplements may be needed:

- **Iron:** Iron absorption can be inhibited. Additional iron supplementation may be necessary (e.g. menstruating women).
- **Vitamin B12:** Medications, GI issues, and degree of vegetarianism can affect B12 levels. Recommend B12 fortified foods (e.g. alternative milks, veggie burgers) 2-3x/day and use blood levels to guide supplementation.
  - Supplementation examples:
    - Adult Strict Vegan- additional 250-500mcg/day
    - Adult Correcting Deficiency- additional 1000mcg/day for 3 months & retest
- **Vitamin D:** Supplementation is recommended for all Canadians regardless of dietary intake: 1000 IU/day for adults, 600 IU/day for children >1 year
- **Calcium:** Use of a calcium calculator ([www.osteoporosis.ca](http://www.osteoporosis.ca)) is recommended. Adequate intake can be achieved with plant sources (e.g. fortified plant-based milks).

**Protein:** Add plant-based proteins to meals to meet daily protein requirements.

*[Watch this 25-min video to get started with plant rich eating.](#)*

*Gender, age, ethnic background, and degree of vegetarianism may affect recommendations. Each patient's specific needs can differ. Individualized advice from a Registered Dietitian is optimal. For further information for adults see: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-healthy-vegetarian-eating.pdf>.*