10 Tips for Weight Management on a Plant Based Diet

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Promoting Sustainable Health and Nutrition

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Top tips for a healthy body weight

1 Choose low energy dense foods

Energy density refers to the number of calories per weight of food.

This ranges from **100 kcal** (non-starchy vegetables) to **4000 kcal** (oil) per 500g. Our bodies are incredibly accurate at eating the same weight of food daily. Choosing predominantly low energy-dense foods like **fruits, vegetables, wholegrains**, **and beans** will allow you to eat a larger volume of food, and feel satisfied, with many fewer calories.

500g Non-starchy Vegetables — 100 Kcal

500g Oil — 4000 Kcal

CALORIE DENSITY

500 calories look like this:

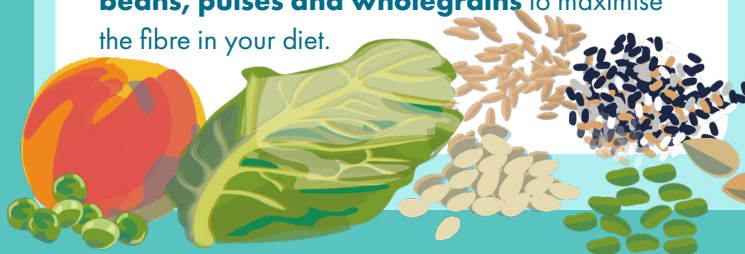| Oil	Cheese	Meat	Potatoes, Rice, Beans	Fruits and Vegetables

This is why whole-plant foods will help you keep lean and satisfied.

2 Increase dietary fibre

Although fibre is known for supporting healthy and regular bowel movements, *fibre also helps to keep us full, regulate our cholesterol and hormones, and support the health of the bacteria in our gut (our gut microbiome).*

These bacteria help us to manage our blood sugar levels and optimise our immune function. Fibre is found *exclusively in* **plant foods,** so base your meals and snacks on **whole fruits, vegetables, beans, pulses and wholegrains** to maximise the fibre in your diet.

3 Reduce or remove added oils

Adding just a tablespoon of oil to your meal will add an *extra 120 kcal.*

You can get all the healthy fats you need from non-refined foods like **avocados, nuts and seeds**, with the bonus of extra fibre and vitamins. Your taste buds will adapt to enjoy these meals more over time and by using extra **spices, herbs** and natural flavourings such as **garlic, lemon juice and onions**, your meals will be just as delicious.

Thanks to forksoverknives.com

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4 Cover most of your plate with non-starchy vegetables

Non-starchy vegetables are not only the *lowest* calorie foods, but they also pack the *biggest nutritional punch!* They are filled with *antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, fibre and water.* **Fill ½ of your plate** with *veggies* at meal times, add *extra vegetables* to your cooking and choose *fruit as a dessert.*

5 Avoid liquid calories.

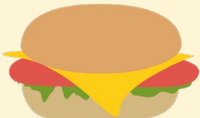**It is very easy to over-consume calories in a liquid form.**

As well as oil, sugary drinks (including fizzy drinks, hot drinks with syrup, fruit juice and alcohol) will **increase** your energy intake very quickly *without your brain registering how many calories you have consumed.*

6 Stay hydrated

Sometimes when we feel hungry, what our bodies really need is hydration.

Keep a water bottle with you and aim for **2 litres of non-sugary fluid daily.**

7 Reduce junk foods

As veganism becomes more popular, more food companies are developing vegan versions of our favourite ultra-processed foods.

These foods are often packed with **sugar, fat, salt** and **extra additives**, meaning they are not good for your health, your gut, or your waistline. Choose **whole foods** and **cook from scratch.** Find **easy recipes** you can cook up quickly when time is limited, or **batch-cook** on a day when you have more time.

8 Get moving

Physical activity is highly beneficial for your physical and mental health and can help you to manage your weight.
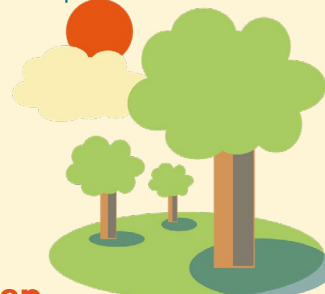
Find activities you get **pleasure** from and incorporate them into your daily life. You could go for a **walk** in nature, **cycle** to work or to the shops, **swim** with a friend, or simply try some new home work-outs like **yoga** or **pilates**.

9 Manage stress

Being stressed is associated with weight gain in some people.

Some people lose their appetite when they are stressed, but more often stress can encourage us to eat more, and make less healthful food choices. Foods containing sugar, fat and salt can act almost like drugs and help us feel better in the short term, **but in the longer term they don't help**. It isn't always possible to do anything about a stressful situation, but taking time out to **meditate** and **get out in the fresh air** can help.

10 Get enough sleep

Being tired is similar to stress – it usually makes us overeat, and make less healthful food choices.

Foods containing lots of sugar or fat can give us an immediate burst of energy which feels good when we are tired, but ultimately encourages us to gain weight. **Aim for 7-8 hours per night**.

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