

Discover the benefits of living a vegan lifestyle

Those considering making the switch to a vegan lifestyle are in luck, with many plant-based foods and cruelty-free cosmetics and products on the market.

Greg McFarlane, director of Vegan Australia, says veganism strives to bring about a world where animals are treated with respect, and instead of exploiting them for food, clothing or any other purpose, humans can be healthy and thrive without eating meat or using animal products.

"The National Health and Medical Research Council recognises a vegan diet is a viable option for all Australians, while Australia's top health experts agree with those in other parts of the world that well-planned vegan diets are safe and healthy for all age groups," Greg says.

"The Australian Dietary Guidelines state alternatives to animal foods, such as nuts, seeds, legumes, beans and tofu, can increase dietary variety and provide a valuable and affordable source of protein and other nutrients that are found in meat."

While concern for animals is the foundation of veganism, there are other benefits to enjoy from a diet that is rich in legumes and leafy greens.

"Plant-based agriculture is a more efficient use of the world's

scarce resources and can feed more people, while helping to reverse serious environmental problems, including global warming, loss of fresh water and rainforest destruction," Greg says.

Whether a person chooses to ease themselves into veganism or transition overnight, Vegan Australia suggests starting with your diet as this will have the biggest impact.

"Don't just cut foods out – add new ones instead, by trying new foods and exploring different cuisines, and aim to be a healthy vegan," Greg says.

"Learn a little about vegan nutrition to make sure you get all your essential nutrients, including Vitamin B12, and don't eat a lot of highly processed junk foods high in fat, sugar and salt."

Vegan Australia also suggests exploring vegan products online and at local shops.

"There are vegan alternatives to just about anything you can think of, so you needn't feel deprived of treats," Greg says.

He further suggests people should make efforts to mingle with other vegans, who can provide support, plan means ahead, prepare to be questioned and not feel disheartened if a slip-up occurs.

HANNAH McDONALD



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Dr Kylie Brown is a local graduate of the University of Queensland and is now accepting new patients at MyHealth Medical Centre in Toowong Village. Now working in general practice, Dr Brown has interests and further post-graduate qualifications in musculo-skeletal and lifestyle anti-aging medicine. She consults weekdays and is happy to help patients with all their healthcare needs.

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