



The Flexitarian Diet

The Flexitarian Protocol is a style of eating where you have mostly plant-based foods (vegetarian) while having meat and other animal products in moderation. It's a more flexible way of eating than fully vegetarian or vegan and can be a more sustainable way of reaping the benefits of a vegetarian diet while still enjoying animal products in moderation. The Flexitarian Diet has no strict rules or calorie restrictions...it's more of a lifestyle than a diet. When and how many animal products you have is entirely up to you, but the average Flexitarian makes only about 20% - 25% of their diet meat and animal products.

This "semi-vegetarian" eating plan is based on the following principles:

- i. Eat mostly fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains.
- ii. Focus on protein from plants instead of animals.
- iii. Be flexible and incorporate meat and animal products occasionally.
- iv. Eat the least processed, most natural form of foods.
- v. Limit added sugar and sweets.

Here are foods to eat regularly:

Proteins: Soybeans, tofu, tempeh, legumes, lentils.

Non-Starchy Vegetables: Greens, bell peppers, brussels sprouts, green beans, carrots, cauliflower, broccoli.

Starchy Vegetables: Winter squash, peas, corn, sweet potato.

Fruits: Apples, oranges, berries, grapes, cherries.

Whole Grains: Quinoa, brown rice, buckwheat, farro.

Nuts, Seeds, & Other Healthy Fats: Almonds, flaxseeds, chia seeds, walnuts, cashews, pistachios, peanut butter, avocados, olives, olive oil, coconut, coconut oil.

Plant-Based Milk Alternatives: Unsweetened almond, coconut, hemp, and soy milk.

Herbs, Spices, & Seasonings: Basil, oregano, mint, thyme, cumin, turmeric, ginger.

Condiments: Reduced-sodium soy sauce, apple cider vinegar, salsa, mustard, nutritional yeast, ketchup without added sugar.

Beverages: Still & sparkling water, tea, coffee.

When incorporating animal products choose the healthiest options available:

Eggs: free-range or pasture-raised.

Poultry: Organic, free-range, or pasture-raised.

Fish: Wild-caught.

Meat: Grass-fed or pasture-raised.

Dairy: Organic from grass-fed or pastured animals.

The Flexitarian Diet may help with weight loss as well as possibly reducing your risk of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. As with any diet or eating plan, reducing calories and getting some exercise is always best. Plus, be sure to check with your doctor if you have any concerns about a Flexitarian Diet being the right choice for you.