



Vegetarians Don't Live Longer

A vegetarian diet is widely thought to be healthy. Bias in favor of it is pervasive, given that for several decades the health establishment has denigrated meat and saturated fat as causing heart disease and even cancer. Unfortunately, the bias appears to be false, since vegetarians don't live longer, as we'll see in this article.

Seventh-Day Adventists and vegetarianism

The Seventh-Day Adventists are a Christian religious denomination that advocates vegetarianism. Not all Adventists are vegetarians but the church strongly promotes the practice to its members, [and to others as well](#). They've been characterized as having an "anti-meat agenda".

Some studies done in Seventh-Day Adventists have found lower mortality rates in the vegetarians among them.

However, [a recent meta-analysis](#) (analysis of other studies) found "that there is modest cardiovascular benefit, but no clear reduction in overall mortality associated with a vegetarian diet. This evidence of benefit is driven mainly by studies in SDA [Seventh-Day Adventists], whereas the effect of vegetarian diet in other cohorts remains unproven."

The study found that the only evidence of "modest" benefit was in studies using Adventists.

Adventists also have a high intake of fruits and vegetables, are encouraged to abstain from alcohol and smoking, they have a low divorce rate and of course are religious.

All of these factors could help explain better health among them, with vegetarianism playing little to no role.

Likewise, non-Adventist vegetarians are more likely to have all of these factors also. Less smoking and drinking, more exercise, less likely to be overweight, in general, to be much more health conscious. Studies that have found better health among vegetarians that did not correct for these factors haven't truly isolated the factor of vegetarianism.

Vegetarianism in a large population

[A recent study done in Australia](#) looked at 267,180 men and women age 45 and over, part of the 45 and Up cohort study. Following adjustment for confounding factors – like those mentioned above, such as smoking, body mass index, etc. – they found that vegetarians don't live longer than others.

Following extensive adjustment for potential confounding factors there was no significant difference in all-cause mortality for vegetarians versus non-vegetarians. There was also no significant difference in mortality risk between pesco-vegetarians or semi-vegetarians versus regular meat eaters. We found no evidence that following a vegetarian diet, semi-vegetarian diet or a pesco-vegetarian diet has an independent protective effect on all-cause mortality.

Whether the subjects never ate meat, or only seldom, or whether they ate only fish, the results were the same. The study did not distinguish between [vegans](#), who eat no animal products at all, and vegetarians, however.

What this means

Several conclusions can be drawn from this study.

One is that other studies that found better health outcomes in vegetarians, but did not adjust for other health factors, are heavily biased, simply because vegetarians and non-vegetarians are not drawn from the same group of people. Vegetarians are more health conscious, probably also higher IQ and socioeconomic status, exercise more, etc., and those factors, not refraining from eating meat, are what drive health differences.

The second conclusion is more important.

We've been, and are being, told by multiple health authorities that eating meat is the main factor behind the epidemic of modern diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, etc.

Based on this study, that cannot be true. If meat caused heart disease and the rest, we could expect to see large differences in death rates between vegetarians and non-vegetarians. But we don't.

The hypothesis of meat as the cause of modern disease is a phantom.

Dietary causes of modern diseases are themselves likely to be modern, in which case we should be looking at sugar, refined carbohydrates, and [vegetable oil](#), all of which are either modern or the consumption of which has increased radically and coincided with the onset of modern diseases.

The foods that man has eaten for a couple million years, such as meat and fish, should have killed off the human race if they were harmful. Instead, humans populated the earth while eating them.

[Meat is a health food.](#)

Did health authorities get anything right?

Is anything that mainstream health authorities recommend correct?

Smoking is bad, and exercise is good, so they got those right.

But saturated fat and cholesterol bad? Wrong.

Meat is unhealthy? Wrong.

[Fortifying food with iron?](#) A mistake.

[Statins?](#) Also a mistake.

Low-fat diets for weight loss? Nope.

You should be skeptical of what mainstream health authorities recommend. In many cases, it would be wiser to do the opposite.

Here's my video I did today on this topic.

PS: My most recent book is [Best Supplements for Men.](#)



PPS: [Check out my Supplements Buying Guide for Men.](#)