

# ONE BITE

*Vegan Magazine*

onebitevegan.com

Sept / Oct 2019

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH  
with a Plant Based Diet

Healthy lunch box  
AND SNACK  
IDEAS FOR KIDS

MUST EATS IN MALTA -

THE VEGAN TREATS YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS

WIN A COPY OF VEGAN COMFORT COOKING + RECIPES

SEASONAL  
» Fall Recipes «

FEELING SPOOKY!  
VEGAN HALLOWEEN  
RECIPES



# TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH

## *Through a Whole Food Plant Based Diet*



Working as a Registered Nurse, I see firsthand how food choices affect health. The foods we eat on a daily basis, beginning in early childhood, play a major role in either the promotion or prevention of disease. While there are growing numbers of health practitioners using food as medicine, many do not incorporate nutrition education as part of the treatment regimen.

Six of the CDC's 2017 top ten causes of death have a strong link to nutrition. Six of these diseases that are claiming lives every day can be prevented or have their progression stopped and reversed when nutrition is utilized as medicine. Let's take a look at each one-

**HEART DISEASE** is the number one leading cause of death in the United States with 647,457 deaths recorded in 2017.

**CANCERS** are the second leading cause of death with 599,108 deaths in 2017.

**CEREBROVASCULAR DISEASES (STROKE)** come in at number five with 146,383 deaths in 2017.

**ALZHEIMER DISEASE** ranks number six with 121,404 deaths in 2017.

**DIABETES MELLITUS** is number seven with 83,564 deaths in 2017.

**KIDNEY DISEASE** is number nine with 50,633 deaths in 2017. *CDC (2017).*





While these numbers are astounding, they don't even account for the massive amount of people who are additionally living with the horrific consequences of these diseases. Lives are interrupted for hospitalizations, doctor appointments, and uncomfortable procedures. In an effort to control their ailments, most people are prescribed a multitude of medications which introduce a host of other adverse effects. Nationwide, health expenditures are skyrocketing. These are only a few examples of the burden placed on families living with chronic health conditions.

The good news is that each one of us has the ability to take control of our health by educating ourselves on the incredible, transformative benefits of a whole food plant based diet. Whether currently experiencing the symptoms of disease or looking to avoid them in the future, understand that the foods you choose to consume at each meal can help you to prevent and even reverse many of the most common and devastating diseases.

Consuming highly processed foods, oils, and animal based products such as meat, dairy, eggs, and seafood, can wreak havoc throughout the body. These foods promote the development of disease in various ways such as producing inflammation, raising blood cholesterol levels, providing an environment that encourages tumor growth, increasing risk for obesity, and offsetting the pH balance of the body. Each one of these states are risk factors for the development and promotion of disease.

In contrast, whole plant foods have extraordinary powers within the human body. These foods, which are naturally free of cholesterol, low in saturated fat, packed with vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and more protein than we could ever need, actually have anti-inflammatory effects, fight tumor development and growth, and reduce weight to healthy levels. These are just a few of the benefits of filling your plate with whole plant foods.

Many of us are here because we have already decided to eliminate animal products from our diet or are beginning to make the

transition. However, for optimal health and wellbeing, it is crucial to eat as close as possible to a whole food plant based vegan diet. There are many foods on the market that, while vegan, certainly do not promote health in the body. If you are struggling with weight loss, a chronic health condition, or simply want to nutritionally support your body in the best way possible, then you will benefit tremendously from taking control of your health through a whole food plant based diet. If you are currently on medication or under the care of a physician for a medical condition, it is important to work with your practitioner while you make this transition.

A whole food plant based diet means eating a variety of vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and legumes as close to their natural state as possible. It is important to include plenty of starchy vegetables and grains to increase satiety. You can also choose to eat a small amount of whole food fats such as those found in nuts, seeds, avocado, olives, and coconut, however you are advised to do so in moderation especially if you are trying to lose weight and reverse certain medical conditions, like cardiovascular disease where these foods are best avoided all together.

The shift to this lifestyle may seem daunting at first until you quickly realize the excitement of having all of your senses reawakened by these vibrant, delicious, and fragrant living foods. It's as if our taste buds get clouded over by all of the high fat animal and processed foods we were eating for so long and are finally wiped clean by eliminating them from our diet. We begin to experience foods in the way nature intended and there is nothing like it!

One of the best ways to enhance your experience with food is to focus on fresh local produce when available. Embrace all that the season has to offer by experimenting with the plant foods available to you at various times throughout the year. Foods grown locally, and organically when possible, offer up some of the most intense flavors and are packed with nutrients to fuel, protect, and heal your body. We've included some fantastic autumn recipes on the following pages for inspiration.

I'm thrilled to be taking on the role of Health & Wellbeing Editor for One Bite Vegan. I will be sharing information on whole food plant based nutrition and healthy living in each issue of the magazine. Also, keep any eye out for a new Health & Wellbeing tab on the One Bite Vegan website coming soon. I welcome your suggestions and requests for future content in the magazine or website. Email [jen@onebitevegan.com](mailto:jen@onebitevegan.com)



### Jen Schmidt —

Jen is the Health & Wellbeing Editor for One Bite Vegan Magazine. She began leaning into a plant-based diet about eight years ago, mostly for health reasons. Through the process of learning about a plant-based lifestyle, she naturally became exposed to the truths about our food system and its effects on our health, the environment, and the animals. She is a wife, a mother, a Registered Nurse, and is passionate about sharing what she's learned (and continues to learn) about being vegan.