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Flexitarian Diet*

The Flexitarian Diet, in simple terms, is a more flexible version of the vegetarian diet. "Flexible" in this case means that meat may be eaten on occasion, though the diet is primarily plant-based.

The Flexitarian Diet emphasizes fresh, natural, and seasonal foods. Staple items from the pantry and freezer are allowed in moderation. The plan boasts approximately 50 grams of protein daily, little of which comes from meat. Flexible five-week meal plans allow dieters to customize and experiment with a number of tasty, calorie-controlled options.

A typical day on the Flexitarian Diet might look like almond butter toast with apples for breakfast, a vegetarian burger on a whole grain bun with avocado and sprouts for lunch, pineapple and nuts for a snack, and a tofu vegetable brown rice stir-fry for dinner. Dessert might be a skim or soy milk hot chocolate with cinnamon. On a rare meat day, chicken can be substituted for tofu in the stir-fry.

According to *The Flexitarian Diet* author Dawn Jackson Blatner, RD, it's acceptable to eat very small amounts of meat and still experience the health benefits of being a vegetarian. One goal of the diet is to facilitate the transition into eating less meat and making a plant-based approach more sustainable.

In her book, Dawn lists more than 100 self-created, simple recipes. All of these recipes contain no more than five primary ingredients, appear alongside nutritional facts, and are designed to satisfy the palette and appetite.

Foods to include:

- Tofu
- Eggs
- Vegetables
- Beans and legumes
- Dairy
- Fruits
- Whole grains
- Nuts and seeds

Foods to avoid:

- Animal protein in excess
- Processed foods

Pros:

- Flexible approach
- Emphasis on whole foods
- Includes recipes and shopping lists
- May promote heart health

Cons:

- Some may require more structure in their diet
- Unclear food allowance suggestions

Sources:

The Flexitarian Diet www.webmd.com [_\(http://www.webmd.com\)_](http://www.webmd.com)

The Flexitarian Diet – The Mostly Vegetarian Way To Lose Weight, Lower Blood Pressure, Be Healthier & Add Years To Your Life – New Book [_\(http://www.medicalnewstoday.com\)_](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com)

Dawn Jackson Blatner's *Flexitarian Diet Recipes*

