

Veganism: From Enemy to Friend

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Veganism is a trend [1]. We cannot reject that fact. However, what we should worry is the amount of misinformation and unscientific facts spreading through the web. If you type, for instance, veganism AND pregnancy in PubMed you would only recall 47 articles.

Veganism in itself could be a healthy, nutrient filled diet approach. However, close monitoring should be carried due to the high risk of lacking certain vitamins such as vitamin B12, which can lead to severe health conditions. As a healthcare professional, I have had under my care an increased number of patients with malnourishment due to lacking vitamins and some other nutrients. It is worrying that these patients tend to be young and/or vulnerable [2].

Nutrition in general is a science with several fields which need expanding scientifically so that we could provide a holistic approach to patients with uncommon dietary requirements. One of more worrying issues now is the presentation of patients who are pregnant and carry a vegan diet. Even though veganism can be healthy, pregnancy requires altered nutritional requirements and, at the moment, how we could approach this is unknown which leads to suggest an omnivore diet approach. [3]

Experimental studies should be carried out in order to understand how we could provide vegan approaches to patients who require it in all aspects of care. This will validate certain practises and give reassurance to certain minorities which feel unease with some of their nutritional choices. Efforts should be made to understand the macronutrient requirements and how these can be provided without animal products fully.

As practitioners we need to be non-judgemental and always remember the autonomy of our patients/clients when approaching nutritional needs.

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