Vegetarian Pregnancy
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There is absolutely no requirement for humans, including pregnant humans, to ingest animal foods. We get along very well - better in fact - without the added problems and stresses that occur when animal products are eaten. You may ask, "Why do so many doctors recommend meat eating?" The reason is that they have never studied nutrition either in medical school or since graduation. There is ample scientific evidence available for those who are curious enough to look for it, and some of the newer physicians are beginning to learn of these facts. But unless the expectant vegetarian mother is lucky enough to have a knowledgeable doctor, she will need to personally study and understand her nutritional needs.

It is said that the pregnant women must eat enough for two. The truth of the matter is that the women must eat food for 1[?], for the fetus does not demand as many calories as a grown person.

The World Health Organization's recommended daily allowance (RDA) for protein is 44 grams; the US government's is 74 grams. The truth is somewhere between these two extremes, but the US RDA is probably safer. It is especially wise in the last trimester to maintain this higher level.

With adequate caloric intake, it is very difficult not to receive sufficient protein, providing some slight care is used in choosing the food sources. A good balance of whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds will assure this balanced protein diet. More variety in this regard is best for the body, as it has a greater amount of amino acids from which to choose the "building blocks" for your child. We tend to forget that the green foods - especially dark green foods, such as broccoli, collard, kale, kohlrabi, spinach, endive, beet and mustard greens, swiss chard, etc. - are all good

sources of protein and also of calcium. We all know that sprouts have a greater amount of protein than their basic seed or nut; however, you should not have more than about two ounces a day in sprout form as there are alkaloids in these that may adversely effect the baby or mother. We should be careful of the amount of the fattier seeds eaten, for we still want the diet to be no more than 25-30% fat calories.

Our critics will also say that it is essential to drink milk and eat a lot of milk products for calcium. The US RDA for calcium is 1200 mgms per day. A good balanced vegetarian diet with use of the dark green leafy vegetables will probably give this, but to be sure it is advisable to supplement the diet with 5-800 mgms of calcium ascorbate daily (calcium plus vitamin C). This should also be associated with 2-300 mgms of magnesium. This is easily obtained from any source of vitamins or food supplements. Do not take supplements that are made from dolomite, bone meal, oyster shells or other animal sources. These may be contaminated with zinc, lead or mercury. The calcium source from milk products may also be contaminated and the amount of fat is markedly concentrated in cheese especially.

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