KARINA INKSTER



# SPROUTED CAINS

COMPANION GUIDE

## My 3000-calorie per day diet and what, exactly, I eat

I get a lot of questions from readers of my first book (*Vegan Vitality*) and people I engage with on social media about what, exactly, I eat in a day. Those who know me in person know that I spend a huge amount of my time eating. After all, my appetite is so large that it has a persona of its own (years ago I named him Percival. It's his fault when leftovers my husband had been saving in our fridge mysteriously disappear).

Those who don't know me are often very surprised when they find out how much I eat. Out of those people, it's mostly females. Though I see the cultural approach (very slowly) changing for the better, we're still assailed with bullshit media messages about food restriction, cleanses and detoxes, cutting entire food groups out of our diets, and generally eating less to achieve the results we're after.

While portion control may be an important piece of your particular puzzle, it's extremely rare that I see a new vegan female client who severely overeats. Instead, a large proportion of my new clients don't eat enough to get the results they're after, and even if they do, they're often not eating the right types of foods (a focus on nutrient-dense whole foods, with macronutrient ratios appropriate to their fitness and physique goals).

## If you want to look and perform like an athlete, you need to eat like one.

I can assure you that top-level athletes view their food as fuel. It's an essential part of their training plan, which also includes sleep and recovery. If you're not taking in enough fuel, or the right kind of fuel, you're not going to be performing at your best. I suggest you use food logging to practice becoming more mindful of what

you're eating, and how it might be fuelling (or detracting from) your fitness and physique goals.

Now, I'm no pro athlete, of course. But I still view food as fuel for my lifestyle, chosen sports, and fitness and physique goals - and so should you!

### Karina's lifestyle, chosen sports, and fitness & physique goals

#### Lifestyle:

The calorie numbers and food logs you see here are from when I worked with clients in-person at a gym 3 days a week (and online clients the rest of the week). I've recently transitioned into 100% online coaching, so the bulk of my day is now sedentary, and I consume slightly less food. I work out up to 8 times a week, and I spend the rest of my time in my home office writing and working with online clients. My main hobby – music – is sedentary: playing accordion, piano, and Australian didgeridoo.

#### **Chosen sports:**

Weight lifting, swimming, jump rope (and playing a 25-pound accordion - does that count?!).

#### Fitness and physique goals:

Over my years of training I've focused mostly on performance and strength goals (e.g. being able to do a ridiculous number of pull-ups in a row) and managing my scoliosis-related back pain. I'm naturally quite lean and need to work extremely hard to gain muscle. My goal for this coming year is to focus on hypertrophy (gaining muscle).

I have a lot of regular workouts during the week, and a turbocharged metabolism (thanks, genetics!) I'm no Olympic athlete, but based on my activities and my genetics, my body burns a ton of fuel.

By sharing my food logs I'm in no way prescribing these foods for anyone else. There's no singular "one size fits all" approach to health and fitness, so make sure you work with a qualified coach to ensure your nutrition (and training, for that matter) supports your goals.

#### Karina's nutrition-related stats

#### **Vital stats:**

Gender: Female

Height: 5'6"

Weight: 125 lbs

Age: 33



#### **Nutrition stats:**

Calorie goal: 3000 - 3300 calories per day

Macronutrient ratio goal: 50% carbs, 30% fat, 20% protein

Macronutrient gram goal: 375-437 grams of carbs, 100-116 grams of fats, and

150-175 grams of protein per day

## How is Karina's diet different from that of most people of her gender and size?

OK, so I'm willing to bet most people don't eat two breakfasts, two lunches, and two dinners, plus snacks in between – unless they're 7-foot-tall strongmen competitors or professional sumo wrestlers. Most women my age and size don't eat upwards of 3000 calories per day.

That's because most people aren't on their feet all day at an active job, work out 8 times a week, and have an absolutely ridiculous metabolism.

So, I eat much more than most females my size – especially those with sedentary jobs. However, in the high-level fitness realm (a.k.a. fitness coaches whose second home is the gym and who take their own training seriously), this type of eating is much more common. Remember, food is fuel. If your body burns a lot of it, you're gonna need to eat a lot of it.

Being a high-calorie vegan means stuffing my face basically 24/7.

Plant-based food is nutrient-dense, not calorie-dense, so this means I'm eating very often. Based on the sheer amount of food I eat, I'm not at all worried about meeting any of my nutrient requirements. I eat 1.2 to 1.4 times the amount of protein a bodybuilder of my size would need, for example, and I usually get upwards of 140% of the iron I need.

However, I still use food logging very occasionally out of sheer curiosity (my calorie needs seem to be increasing each year!), and to make sure that I'm on track with my macros.

### Karina's sample food logs

Here's a 2-day sample of my food intake, logged using MyFitnessPal.

June 6, 2017

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FOODS	Calories	Carbs	Fat	Protein	Cholest	Sodium	Sugars	Fiber
Breakfast 1								
No Name - Old Fashioned Rolled Oats, 0.5 cup (40 grams)	150	27g	3g	5g	0mg	5mg	1g	<b>4</b> g
Silk - Soy Milk - Original, 4 oz (1 cup)	55	5g	2g	4g	0mg	53mg	3g	1g
Assam - Tea, 1 cup	0	0g	0g	0g	0mg	0mg	0g	0g
Breakfast 2	ο;							7
Berry/apple/flax/hemp/chia/oat smoothie, 1 serving(s)	522	62g	22g	22g	0mg	182mg	21g	16g
Omega Nutrition - Certified Organic Flax Oil, 2 tsp	80	0g	9g	0g	0mg	0mg	0g	0g
Homemade - Dried Apples, 0.75 cup (86g)	69	17g	0g	0g	0mg	16mg	10g	0g
Nature's Path Organic - Flax Plus Waffle, 2 waffles	200	30g	8g	4g	0mg	330mg	5g	<b>5</b> g
Adams (Canada) - 100% Natural Creamy Peanut Butter, 32 g (1 tbsp)	200	6g	16g	6g	0mg	110mg	<b>2</b> g	29
Generic - Fleischmanns Lactose Free Margarine, 2 tsp	70	0g	8g	0g	0mg	80mg	0g	0g
North Coast Naturals - Brown Rice Protein, 2 tbsp	150	4g	2g	26g	0mg	20mg	0g	1g
Lunch 1								
Homemade Ginger Beer (+ agave & lemon), 1 serving(s)	88	20g	0g	0g	0mg	18mg	18g	0g
Light Life - Soy Tempeh, 2 oz.	115	8g	4g	11g	0mg	5mg	1g	<b>6</b> g
Sunrise - Tofu Puffs, 60 g	180	2g	14g	12g	0mg	1mg	0g	1g
Generic - Sesame Tahini, 1 Tbsp (28 g)	100	2g	9g	3g	0mg	38mg	0g	1g
San-j - Organic Tamari, 1 Tbsp	10	0g	0g	2g	0mg	940mg	0g	0g
Beets, raw, 1 beet (2	35	8g	0g	1g	0mg	64mg	6g	<b>2</b> g
Carrots, raw, 0.5 cup chopped	26	6g	0g	1g	0mg	44mg	3g	<b>2</b> g
Mushrooms - Raw, 1 cup, pieces or slices	15	2g	0g	2g	0mg	3mg	1g	1g
Cucumber - Cucumbers, 50 g	8	2g	0g	0g	0mg	1mg	1g	Og
Red Star - Nutritional Yeast, 2.25 tsp	70	6g	1g	8g	0mg	11mg	0g	49
Cabbage, napa, cooked, 0.5 cup	7	1g	0g	1g	0mg	6mg	0g	0g
Beans - Black, 0.75 Cup	170	31g	1g	11g	0mg	2mg	0g	110
Safeway - Salsa, 2 T	10	2g	0g	0g	0mg	190mg	1g	0g
Rice - Brown, long-grain, cooked, 0.5 cup	108	22g	1g	3g	0mg	5mg	0g	20
Lunch 2								
Manny'S - Tortilla- Whole Wheat, 2 tortilla	340	56g	8g	10g	0mg	1,000mg	2g	<b>6</b> g
Generic - Red Lentils Cooked, 25 g	29	5g	0g	2g	0mg	1mg	0g	20
Oil - Olive, 1 tablespoon	119	0g	14g	0g	0mg	0mg	0g	0g
Herbs - Green Onion, Raw, 1 stalk (15g)	5	1g	0g	0g	0mg	2mg	0g	00
Silk Soy Milk - Chai, 1 cup	130	19g	4g	6g	0mg	100mg	14g	0g
Dinner 1								
Simply Protein (Canada) - Spicy Chili Chips 33g pkg., 1 bag	140	11g	4g	15g	0mg	320mg	2g	10
Nugo - Dark Mint Chocolate Chip Protein Bar, 1 Bar	200	29g	5g	10g	0mg	160mg	14g	1g
Dinner 2								
Homemade - Vegan Garbanzo Veggie Minestrone, 1 bowl	140	14g	6g	8g	0mg	600mg	5g	30
Saltines - Saltines, 10 crackers	120	22g	3g	2g	0mg	280mg	0g	0g
Arugula - Arugula, 0.5 Cup (raw)	2	0g	0g	0g	0mg	3mg	0g	00
Mushrooms, white, raw, 0.25 cup, pieces or slices	4	1g	0g	1g	0mg	1mg	0g	00
Homemade Ginger Beer (+ agave & lemon), 1.25 serving(s)	109	25g	0g	0g	0mg	22mg	23g	0g
Lindt Excellence - Chocolat Noire 70%, 1.0 squares	57	3g	4g	1g	0mg	3mg	3g	<b>1</b> g
TOTAL	L: 3,833	449g	148g	177g	0mg	4,616mg	136g	73g

#### Totals from this day:

Calories: 3833

Macro ratio: 47% carbs, 35% fat, 18% protein (rounded to nearest whole number)

Macro grams: 449 g carbs, 148 g fats, 177 g protein

Note that I'm not concerned if my macros or calories aren't exactly on target based on my goal numbers. I eat an extremely varied diet so every day will be different.

Also, note that even though I got only 18% of my calories from protein, it's still 177 grams, which is much more than even a bodybuilder of my size would need.

April 16, 2017

FOODS	Calories	Carbs	Fat	Protein	Cholest	Sodium	Sugars	Fiber
Breakfast 1		-						
No Name - Old Fashioned Rolled Oats, 0.5 cup (40 grams)	150	27g	3g	5g	0mg	5mg	1g	49
Sun Warrior - Protein Raw Vegan Vanilla, 21 grams (1 scoop)	100	0g	2g	19g	0mg	320mg	0g	29
Silk - Soy Milk - Original, 6 oz (1 cup)	83	7g	3g	6g	0mg	79mg	5g	20
Breakfast 2								
Nature's Path Organic - Flax Plus Waffle, 2 waffles	200	30g	8g	4g	0mg	330mg	5g	50
Adams (Canada) - 100% Natural Creamy Peanut Butter, 32 g (1 tbsp)	200	6g	16g	6g	0mg	110mg	2g	20
Generic - Fleischmanns Lactose Free Margarine, 2 tsp	70	0g	8g	0g	0mg	80mg	0g	00
Primal Strips - meatless vegan jerky-Texas BBQ, 29 grams	81	11g	1g	10g	0mg	383mg	5g	10
Assam - Black Tea (No Milk or Sugar), 8 fl oz	0	0g	0g	0g	0mg	0mg	0g	09
Silk - Soy Milk - Original, 2 oz (1 cup)	28	2g	1g	2g	0mg	26mg	2g	19
Lunch 1								
Berry/apple/flax/hemp/chia/oat smoothie, 1 serving(s)	522	62g	22g	22g	0mg	182mg	21g	160
Lunch 2								
Lotus Foods - Purple Potato and Brown Rice Ramen, 1 ramen w/ seasoning	300	64g	3g	6g	0mg	720mg	2g	49
Dinner 1								
Homemade - Coconut Curry Sauce, 1 cup	140	14g	8g	5g	0mg	0mg	6g	89
Indian - Aloo Gobi, 1 cup	300	38g	10g	8g	0mg	100mg	0g	100
yoso - coconut yogurt unsweetened, 126 g	130	14g	9g	1g	0mg	15mg	1g	79
Homemade - Broiled Grapefruit, 1 fruit	282	56g	12g	1g	31mg	93mg	37g	30
Lindt - Chocolat Noir 70%, 3 squares (10 g)	160	10g	12g	2g	0mg	20mg	8g	29
the Ginger People - Crystallized Ginger, 24 g (about 4 pieces)	80	19g	0g	0g	0mg	35mg	18g	0
Yves - Veggie Meatballs, 135 gram	270	16g	11g	27g	0mg	855mg	2g	5
Generic - Papadum, 2 wafer	60	4g	4g	2g	0mg	250mg	0g	0
TOTAL:	3,156	380g	133g	126g	31mg	3,603mg	115g	729

#### Totals from this day:

Calories: 3156

Macro ratio: 48% carbs, 38% fat, 16% protein (rounded to nearest whole number)

Macro grams: 380 g carbs, 133 g fats, 126 g protein

Food logging will never be 100% accurate. It's meant to give you ballpark figures to see if you're on the right track.

Example #1 of inaccuracy: The sodium content shown in my June 6th food log is much higher than what it is in reality. I didn't want to take the time to create a new recipe entry in the app for the soup my husband made, so I chose a user-generated "homemade vegan garbanzo veggie minestrone" instead. It still gives me ballpark figures for macros and calories, but is far higher in sodium than our version.

Example #2 of inaccuracy: The cholesterol content of a broiled grapefruit (see "Dinner 1" on April 16) should be zero. No vegan foods contain cholesterol! Perhaps the food database entry for this item contained butter. Either way, you'll often see inaccuracies like this.

#### What did I learn from my food logs?

Since I've logged my food regularly (a few days every few months) for a number of years, there wasn't much to be surprised by. I did notice my protein intake was a bit lower than normal, based just on percentage of calories. If I didn't eat such a high amount of food (e.g. 2000 calories instead of well over 3000), then I'd be more concerned about getting a slightly higher percentage of my calories from protein. My totals were still 177 grams and 126 grams from my 2 days of food logging, which is well above what a 125-pound strength athlete needs.

## Sample 50% carbs, 30% fat, 20% protein food logs

On the following pages, you'll find sample food logs that follow my suggested 50% carb, 30% fat, and 20% protein macronutrient breakdown. The first three food logs total about 1600 calories per day, and the next two total about 2000 calories per day.

For more detail on these items listed in the food logs:

Buddha bowls: See page 57 of Sprouted Gains.

Vegan chili: See page 29 of Sprouted Gains.

Peanut butter chickpea energy balls: See page 31 of Sprouted Gains.

Tofu scramble: See page 23 of Sprouted Gains.

Seitan: Here's my recipe.

Tabouleh salad: Here's the recipe I use.

Minestrone: See page 16 of this guide.

From:	2018-07-25	Show:	✓ Food Diary	☐ Food Notes	change report
To:	2018-07-25		Exercise Diary	Exercise notes	

#### July 25, 2018

FOODS	Calories	Carbs	Fat	Protein	Cholest	Sodium	Sugars	Fiber
Breakfast 1								
Blueberries, 0.25 cup	21	5g	0g	0g	0mg	0mg	4g	1g
Silk - Soy Milk - Original, 2 oz (1 cup)	28	2g	1g	2g	0mg	26mg	2g	1g
Manitoba Harvest - Hemp Hearts ~ Raw Shelled Hemp Seeds*, 2.0 tbsp	113	2g	9g	7g	0mg	0mg	1g	2g
No Name - Old Fashioned Rolled Oats, 0.5 cup (40 grams)	150	27g	3g	5g	0mg	5mg	1g	4g
Breakfast 2								
North Coast Naturals - Brown Rice Protein, 2 tbsp	150	4g	2g	26g	0mg	20mg	0g	1g
Silk - Soy Milk - Original, 16 oz (1 cup)	220	18g	9g	16g	0mg	210mg	12g	4g
Strawberry - Strawberry, 0.5 cups	27	6g	0g	1g	0mg	1mg	4g	2g
Generic/ Sanar- Linaza - Ground Organic Flax Seed, 2 tbsp	50	3g	5g	2g	0mg	0mg	0g	3g
Banana - Banana, 1 medium banana (126 g)	105	27g	0g	1g	0mg	1mg	14g	3g
Lunch 1								
Adams (Canada) - 100% Natural Creamy Peanut Butter, 32 g (1 tbsp)	200	6g	16g	6g	0mg	110mg	2g	2g
Rice cakes - Rice Cake, 2 cake	100	22g	0g	2g	0mg	0mg	0g	0g
Dinner 1								
Saltines - Saltines, 10 crackers	120	22g	3g	2g	0mg	280mg	0g	0g
Vegan Chili - Vegan Chili, 1.5 cup	300	48g	7g	14g	0mg	300mg	9g	12g
TOTAL:	1,584	192g	55g	84g	0mg	953mg	49g	35g

Oatmeal (overnight or cooked)

Smoothie

From:	2018-07-26	Show:	▼ Food Diary	☐ Food Notes	change report
To:	2018-07-26		Exercise Diary	Exercise notes	

#### July 26, 2018

FOODS	Calories	Carbs	Fat	Protein	Cholest	Sodium	Sugars	Fiber
Breakfast 1								
North Coast Naturals - Brown Rice Protein, 1 tbsp	75	2g	1g	13g	0mg	10mg	0g	1g
Berry/apple/flax/hemp/chia/oat smoothie, 0.75 serving(s)	391	47g	16g	17g	0mg	137mg	16g	12g
Breakfast 2								
Peanut Butter Chickpea Energy Balls, 1 serving(s)	108	14g	4g	4g	0mg	25mg	6g	2g
Lunch 1								
Buddha bowl dressing (tahini + nootch), 1 serving(s)	82	4g	5g	5g	0mg	523mg	0g	2g
Trader Joe's - Shredded Green Cabbage, 0.5 Cup	10	2g	0g	1g	0mg	8mg	1g	1g
Beans - Black, 0.5 Cup	114	21g	1g	8g	0mg	1mg	0g	8g
Beets, raw, 1 beet (2	35	8g	0g	1g	0mg	64mg	6g	2g
Soyganic - Smoked Tofu, 0.33 container (191.25 grams)	105	1g	6g	10g	0mg	180mg	0g	1g
Flik - Quinoa, 0.5 cup	111	20g	2g	4g	0mg	6mg	1g	3g
Lunch 2								
Tropicana - Grapefruit, 1 Medium Grapefruit	60	15g	0g	1g	0mg	0mg	11g	2g
Dinner 1								
Amy's - Bean & Rice Burrito - Non-Dairy, 1 burrito	320	52g	8g	10g	0mg	580mg	2g	8g
Dinner 2								
Tangerines, (mandarin oranges), raw, 0.5 cup, sections	52	13g	0g	1g	0mg	2mg	10g	2g
Pistachio - Pistachio, 0.25 cup without shells (30g)	160	8g	14g	6g	0mg	70mg	2g	3g
TO	TAL: 1,623	207g	57g	81g	0mg	1,606mg	55g	47g

Buddha bowl

From:	2018-07-24	Show:	✓ Food Diary	☐ Food Notes	change report
To:	2018-07-24		Exercise Diary	Exercise notes	

#### July 24, 2018

FOODS	Calories	Carbs	Fat	Protein	Cholest	Sodium	Sugars	Fiber
Breakfast 1								
Manitoba Harvest - Hemp Hearts ~ Raw Shelled Hemp Seeds*, 2.0 tbsp	113	2g	9g	7g	0mg	0mg	1g	2g
Silk - Soy Milk - Original, 4 oz (1 cup)	55	5g	2g	4g	0mg	53mg	3g	1g
No Name - Old Fashioned Rolled Oats, 0.5 cup (40 grams)	150	27g	3g	5g	0mg	5mg	1g	<b>4</b> g
Breakfast 2								
Organic - Cherry Tomato, 0.33 cup	11	3g	0g	1g	0mg	0mg	0g	1g
Each - Mushrooms, 3 Large	15	2g	0g	2g	0mg	3mg	0g	1g
Homemade - Sauteed Onion, 1/4 cup cooked	30	4g	1g	1g	0mg	0mg	0g	1g
Tofu - Firm Tofu, 85 grams	70	2g	4g	7g	0mg	10mg	0g	2g
Lunch 1								
Nuts, almonds, 0.25 cup, whole	207	8g	18g	8g	0mg	0mg	2g	<b>4</b> g
Apples - Apples, 1 medium apple	80	22g	0g	0g	0mg	0mg	16g	5g
Lunch 2								
Carrots - Shredded, 3 ounces	35	8g	0g	1g	0mg	65mg	5g	2g
Seapoint - Dry. Roasted Edamame, 0.25 cup	130	10g	4g	14g	0mg	150mg	1g	8g
Buddha bowl dressing (tahini + nootch), 1 serving(s)	82	4g	5g	5g	0mg	523mg	0g	2g
Generic - Napa Cabbage, Raw, 3.5 oz	26	3g	0g	1g	0mg	5mg	1g	1g
Cabbage - Purple Cabbage, 1 cup (89g)	22	5g	0g	1g	0mg	0mg	0g	2g
Baby Kale - Baby Kale, 1 cups	23	5g	0g	2g	0mg	18mg	1g	1g
Dinner 1								
Peanut Butter Chickpea Energy Balls, 3 serving(s)	324	41g	13g	11g	0mg	75mg	17g	6g
Dinner 2								
Salsa - Salsa, 2 tbsp	20	2g	0g	0g	0mg	150mg	0g	0g
Beans - Black, 0.5 Cup	114	21g	1g	8g	0mg	1mg	0g	8g
Morrison - Brown Rice, 0.5 cup	124	26g	1g	3g	0mg	39mg	1g	1g
TOTAL	.: 1,631	200g	61g	81g	0mg	1,097mg	49g	52g

Tofu scramble

Large salad with Buddha bowl dressing

From:	2019-03-06	Show:	✓ Food Diary	☐ Food Notes	change report
To:	2019-03-06		Exercise Diary	Exercise notes	

#### March 6, 2019

FOODS	Calories	Carbs	Fat	Protein	Cholest	Sodium	Sugars	Fibe
Breakfast 1								
Peanut Butter Chickpea Energy Balls, 1 serving(s)	108	14g	4g	4g	0mg	25mg	6g	2
Manitoba Harvest - Hemp Hearts ~ Raw Shelled Hemp Seeds*, 2.0 tbsp	113	2g	9g	7g	0mg	mg	1g	2
Silk - Soy Milk - Original, 4 oz (1 cup)	55	5g	2g	4g	0mg	53mg	3g	1
No Name - Old Fashioned Rolled Oats, 0.5 cup (40 grams)	150	27g	3g	5g	0mg	5mg	1g	4
Lunch 1								
Almond - Almonds, 25 g	149	11g	13g	5g	mg	0mg	1g	3
Apples - Apples, 1 medium apple	80	22g	0g	0g	0mg	0mg	16g	Ę
Homemade seitan, 2 serving(s)	210	10g	1g	37g	0mg	445mg	1g	4
Homemade - Tabouleh, 1 cup	116	15g	6g	3g	mg	mg	g	2
Manny`S - Tortilla- Whole Wheat, 1 tortilla	170	28g	4g	5g	0mg	500mg	1g	3
hummus - Hummus, 4 tbsp	140	8g	10g	4g	0mg	260mg	2g	4
Dinner 1								
Buddha bowl dressing (tahini + nootch), 0.5 serving(s)	41	2g	2g	3g	0mg	262mg	0g	
Arugula, raw, 1.5 cup	8	1g	0g	1g	0mg	8mg	1g	(
Western family - Rice crackers, 11 crackers	80	17g	2g	1g	0mg	105mg	0g	(
Homemade - Vegan Chilli, 2 cup cooked	272	62g	3g	28g	0mg	638mg	8g	22
Dinner 2								
Peanut Butter Chickpea Energy Balls, 3 serving(s)	324	41g	13g	11g	0mg	75mg	17g	6
TOTAL:	2,016	265g	72g	118g	0mg	2,376mg	58g	59

From:	2019-03-07	Show:	✓ Food Diary	☐ Food Notes	change report
To:	2019-03-07		Exercise Diary	Exercise notes	

#### March 7, 2019

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FOODS	Calories	Carbs	Fat	Protein	Cholest	Sodium	Sugars	Fibe
Breakfast 1								
Naked Rice - Brown Rice Protein, 2 scoop (30g)	120	4g	1g	25g	0mg	0mg	0g	19
Manitoba Harvest - Hemp Hearts ~ Raw Shelled Hemp Seeds*, 2.0 tbsp	113	2g	9g	7g	0mg	mg	1g	2
Silk - Soy Milk - Original, 4 oz (1 cup)	55	5g	2g	4g	0mg	53mg	3g	10
No Name - Old Fashioned Rolled Oats, 0.5 cup (40 grams)	150	27g	3g	5g	0mg	5mg	1g	4
Breakfast 2								
Grapefruit - Half, 2 half	82	21g	0g	0g	0mg	0mg	18g	3
Lunch 1								
hummus - Hummus, 4 tbsp	140	8g	10g	4g	0mg	260mg	2g	4
Western family - Rice crackers, 11 crackers	80	17g	2g	1g	0mg	105mg	0g	0
Homemade - Vegan Garbanzo Veggie Minestrone, 1.5 bowl	210	21g	9g	12g	0mg	900mg	8g	5
Dinner 1								
Salsa - Salsa, 4 tablespoon	20	2g	0g	0g	0mg	200mg	2g	2
Avocado - Avocado, 0.5 medium	117	6g	11g	1g	0mg	5mg	1g	5
Beets, raw, 0.75 beet (2	26	6g	0g	1g	0mg	48mg	4g	2
Carrots, raw, 0.5 cup chopped	26	6g	0g	1g	0mg	44mg	3g	2
Cabbage, raw, 1 cup, chopped	22	5g	0g	1g	0mg	16mg	3g	2
Black Beans, 1 cup	220	38g	2g	14g	0mg	20mg	2g	14
Buddha bowl dressing (tahini + nootch), 1 serving(s)	82	4g	5g	5g	0mg	523mg	0g	2
Rice - Brown, long-grain, cooked, 1 cup	216	45g	2g	5g	0mg	10mg	1g	4
Dinner 2								
Peanut Butter Chickpea Energy Balls, 3 serving(s)	324	41g	13g	11g	0mg	75mg	17g	6
TOTAL:	2,003	258g	69g	97g	0mg	2,264mg	66g	599



#### ITALIAN-INSPIRED DISHES

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#### **MINESTRONE SOUP**

There is no set recipe for this traditional Italian soup. Recipes vary by region and family, and are often based on which vegetables are in season. Feel free to experiment with the thickness of this soup. For a more brothy soup, add an extra cup of vegetable stock. For a more stewlike texture, use 7 cups instead of 8 cups of vegetable stock.

#### The Grub:

2 tablespoons olive oil or coconut oil

1 large onion, diced

2 cloves garlic, minced

8 cups vegetable stock

1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes

2 tablespoons tomato paste

1 (15-ounce) can white beans (e.g., navy or cannellini), drained and rinsed

2 carrots, sliced

2 cups additional vegetables of your choice (e.g., broccoli, cauliflower, zucchini, celery)

2 bay leaves

½ teaspoon dried thyme

1 teaspoon dried oregano

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped

3/4 cup dry small pasta (e.g., ditalini or mini shells)

1 cup chopped spinach or kale

#### The How To:

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook for 3–5 minutes, until turning translucent. Add garlic and cook for one minute.

Add vegetable stock, tomatoes, tomato paste, beans, carrots and other veggies, bay leaves, thyme, oregano, black pepper, and parsley. Cover and bring to a boil, then cook over medium-low heat for 15 minutes, until carrots are soft.

Increase heat to high, and add pasta as soup comes to a boil. Continue cooking on a low boil until pasta is cooked (about 10 minutes).

Remove from heat and stir in spinach or kale.

Serves 6

## Busting soy myths once and for all!

I interviewed Dr. Melissa Reilly for my podcast to once and for all bust one of the most pervasive myths within veganism: the myth that soy is bad for us, that it causes man boobs, that it causes cancer, that it causes infertility, or messes with our hormones.

Dr. Reilly is a clinical assistant professor of pharmacy practice at the University of Mississippi. She's also a clinical pharmacist. She completed a post-doctorate residency program in geriatrics and primary care, and she's run nine marathons in nine different states!

Listen to the episode with Dr. Reilly here.

Karina Inkster: Hey, Melissa. Thank you so much for joining me today.

Melissa Reilly: Yes. No problem. Thank you for having me.

Karina Inkster: I'm pretty excited. We are tackling one of the most pervasive and, honestly, probably the most ridiculous myths within veganism today, so I think it's super important what we're gonna be talking about. But, before we get to the bullshit busting, I would love to get a little bit of background on you. You're a pharmacist and you're vegan, so why don't we talk about the pharmacist part first. What was your kind of path or motivation for choosing that profession?

Melissa Reilly: Yeah, so going into pharmacy was kind of random. I just took a career aptitude test in high school and one of the suggestions was pharmacist and I was like, all right, let me go for it. I figured a medical doctor seemed a little bit much and then a nurse seemed like they had to do a lot of grunt work, so I was like a pharmacist was a good middle.

Karina Inkster: That's pretty funny actually.

Melissa Reilly: Yeah, I know. It's kind of random, but I happened to just become super passionate about it and really found that it was actually something that I'm good at, so here I am.

Karina Inkster: That's awesome. Very cool. So what about the vegan part? How did that come to be? How did you come to choose that as a lifestyle?

Melissa Reilly: I have actually been a vegan longer than I've been a pharmacist. So, I started when I was a kid and I like to joke that it was because of my brother. I was a picky eater. I didn't really like anything, except I liked fruits and vegetables, but I didn't like meat. No chicken tenders for me, no eggs or whatever. So he was telling me, eggs come from chicken butts, and I was like, "Yeah, that's gross. I'm not gonna eat that anymore." And then it made me think about all the other foods that we were eating and that they were coming from animals. And so I'm coming at it as a vegan from an animal rights perspective. Then as I got older, it grew to environmentalism, and then, as I went to school and learned about health, then I realized there was a huge need for veganism for health as well.

Karina Inkster: For sure. Yeah, it just becomes kind of a full-on, well-rounded motivation, doesn't it?

Melissa Reilly: Yeah, exactly. It's good for everything.

Karina Inkster: That's cool. So how long has it been for you then?

Melissa Reilly: It's kind of uncertain because I didn't know what veganism was when I was a kid. I just knew that I didn't want to eat animal products, but there were tons of times where I just didn't know if something was baked, like if eggs or milk were baked into something or ... I wasn't thinking about that probably until high school.

Karina Inkster: Got it. That makes sense. Your story's kind of similar to our guest Melody Schoenfield, who said, "You know, it basically started when I was a kid. I just kind of knew this was the deal." So that's really cool.

Okay. So let's get into our myth for today. We're talking about all things soy, which is such ... I don't even know how to describe it. It's like a cesspool of myths in the vegan world.

Melissa Reilly: Yes, definitely.

Karina Inkster: There so many different angles and so many different beliefs and conflicting research, so we want to get down to the types of research that have been done and what we can say right now about whether soy is ... I don't like using the term "good" or "bad" for your health, but that's kind of what we hear in the media, right? So, why don't we start with, what is soy in the first place?

Melissa Reilly: Soy is a really harmless legume, so it's just a vegetable from the soybean plant. It's very high in nutrients, like all legumes are, so protein, fiber, iron, magnesium, and potassium are just some of the things that they offer.

Karina Inkster: And it comes in many forms, of course. So, we've got the soybean, which is probably the least processed form. But then we've got other forms too, right? Foods that are a little bit more processed.

Melissa Reilly: Yes, definitely. So, there's tofu. You can get milk. You can make your own milk, but if you're just buying it, then there is some processing involved in there too. And then there's a lot of soy-based meats, I guess, alternative meats.

Karina Inkster: Right. Like kind of the faux chicken, faux tenders, all that kind of stuff.

Melissa Reilly: Yeah. I'm not huge on those, but I know they exist and they're great for people in transition.

Karina Inkster: That's a good point. Okay, well then, where does soy get this bad rap from then? Why are there all these crazy myths about it?

Melissa Reilly: I'm not sure exactly how it started, that people just started shitting on soy, but my hypothesis is that it contains phytoestrogens and I think that word is just kind of ... It's a big word, it's a new word, so people have just the estrogen part. That was what's familiar to them, and so they're like, "Oh, soybeans have estrogens." But really, phytoestrogens are not the same thing as estrogens. Estrogens only come from animals and phytoestrogens are in plants.

Karina Inkster: Makes sense. Now, is soy the only place you can get plant phytoestrogens?

Melissa Reilly: No, definitely not. They're in a whole bunch of things. I think even rice has them, but hops have them. So I like to say for a lot of men who are like, "I don't eat soy because of man boobs." I'm like, "Well, how 'bout beer?" 'Cause beer actually may have more phytoestrogens than soy does.

Karina Inkster: That's crazy. So, I don't know why it's all just loaded onto soy then. That's kind of ridiculous.

Melissa Reilly: Yeah. I know.

Karina Inkster: I found a list put out by the Harvard Health website, and they have a list of foods that have phytoestrogens in them.

Melissa Reilly: Oh, awesome.

Karina Inkster: And it's tons. There's ramen noodles and pistachios. And of course, lots of non-vegan things like eggs and chicken nuggets and whatnot, but for us, that's a moot point. But, yeah, they're everywhere and also very natural.

Melissa Reilly: Yes, definitely.

Karina Inkster: There are certain cultures that have been consuming soy products, presumably for longer than we have here in the West.

Melissa Reilly: Yes. Asian countries have been consuming soy products forever. I don't even know when it started, but it's been a long time. I'm Japanese, and so whenever I would go visit my Japanese grandmother, even as a kid, as soon as I could start chewing food, she would just put down a block of tofu with some soy sauce and sesame seeds, and that was a snack or a meal.

Karina Inkster: That actually sounds pretty awesome. Keep it simple, keep it healthy.

Melissa Reilly: Yes, exactly. I loved it. So when I hear a lot of Americans saying that they don't like soy, it's different for me because I was raised on it. So Asians have been consuming soy products forever. And they also have a substantially lower cancer and heart disease rate than Americans do and I think it could be related.

Karina Inkster: That's a fair point. So, what's the difference between these phytoestrogens and the estrogens we have in the human body?

Melissa Reilly: Their chemical structure is different. They're just different structures entirely. And then, how they attach to receptors in tissues within our body are different. Because of their attachment to different receptors and their affinity for different receptors in tissues in our body, they're gonna have different effects in our body and for our health as well. So for estrogen it may have

negative effects in the breast tissue, but phytoestrogens actually have positive effect in breast tissue.

Karina Inkster: Right, and we're gonna talk about some of the research that's been done in that area as well. Now, you mentioned, just now, the whole man boob thing, which is a huge discussion point within veganism and even outside of veganism. Anything related to soy, people are like, "Oh my god, I don't eat soy 'cause I don't want the man boobs." What's the deal?

Melissa Reilly: Even some vegan men say they avoid soy. I think they must be new to it, but they avoid soy because they think man boobs. And I always tell them, one, I had mentioned earlier that beer contains phytoestrogens and most of them drink beer. But also, I've been eating soy since I was a child and I'm pretty flatchested, so it doesn't work.

Karina Inkster: Ha, that's hilarious! I mean, mind you, that's a case study of one, but I can fully support that because I'm exactly the same. So there's two, a case study of two.

Melissa Reilly: There's no literature to support that soy products give you man boobs or the official term for it is gynecomastia, but yes, no man boobs. I did find one case report of a 60-year-old man who developed gynecomastia after eating soy products, but I couldn't find any information on him, so not about his medical history, not about the medications he was taking. And tons of medication do cause it, so it could have been confounded by a bunch of different things.

Karina Inkster: That's a good point. So if we don't know what those are, then we can't really say with certainty that that's what it was.

Melissa Reilly: Exactly.

Karina Inkster: Interesting. Okay, let's move onto another myth, which I think is bigger, possibly, than the man boob one, which says something because that's just everywhere. And that is soy and cancer. A lot of people avoid it because they either have had cancer and they been told to avoid it, or they just want to prevent cancer in the first place. So, what is the deal with this cancer and soy correlation myth?

Melissa Reilly: It goes back to the misinformation that phytoestrogens are estrogen. So hormone therapies, hormones in general, those can contribute to cancer. But phytoestrogens, as we talked about, are not estrogens, so it's

completely different. Phytoestrogens do have protective effects against cancer and phytoestrogens contain isoflavones called genistein and daidzein. Genistein actually stops the cell cycle progression, which is usually what cancer is, it's just these cells that just keep growing and growing. So genistein, which is in the soybeans, also induces apoptosis, which is cell death. It has antioxidant properties and inhibits angiogenesis. These are all things that without these mechanisms that stop them, it can just keep proliferating and that's what cancer or tumors are. So the phytoestrogens do the opposite of that because they stop that cycle from happening.

Karina Inkster: Interesting.

Melissa Reilly: Yeah. So the myth that says soy causes cancer is just misinformation, and miscommunication, misinterpretation of phytoestrogen and estrogens in hormone therapy causing cancer.

Karina Inkster: Interesting. Now you just mentioned inhibiting angiogenesis. Can you clarify what that is?

Melissa Reilly: Yes. Angiogenesis is the creation of new blood vessels and so these are needed for tumors to continue to grow. You don't want that.

Karina Inkster: That makes sense. So I think breast cancer is probably the type of cancer that we hear most about when it comes to soy. So maybe you could go over some research that's been done in this area.

Melissa Reilly: There have been a ton of studies done on this exact topic, but there's lots of literature saying that, lots of studies and meta-analyses (which are just a compilation of a bunch of different studies), and they all conclude that soy intake is inversely associated with breast cancer risk. So I know sometimes somebody may have mentioned that a doctor would recommend a breast cancer survivor to stay away from soy products and I think that goes back to misinformation. There's a study where they looked at breast cancer survivors, and half of them received soy products or were taking soy supplementation and the other half weren't. What they found was that the breast cancer survivors who were taking soy had lower recurrence rates of breast cancer than those who did not take soy supplementation.

Karina Inkster: Wow. So that's pretty huge. So is this a randomly controlled trial?

Melissa Reilly: Yeah. It likely was. I don't have that actual study with me now, but it probably was since they were looking at the two groups, but I can find that and get back to you.

Karina Inkster: Yeah, because I mean that's the exact opposite of what we're hearing.

Melissa Reilly: Yeah. So everything that we hear I think has just spiralled out of control because there actually really isn't that much literature saying ... I can't really find many studies at all that say that it does cause cancer. So I think it's just a fear that people have that kind of spiralled out of control.

Karina Inkster: Right. So I guess media, headlines, sensationalism, and fear-mongering is probably playing a huge role here.

Melissa Reilly: Yeah, exactly, and when you do look at studies, you do have to really critique it because there's a lot of bias that goes into it. You can really manipulate numbers and stats to play in your favor. There was a randomized controlled trial that was done in 2014 that said, yes, consuming soy products can contribute to your risk of cancer. But when you take a look at that study, which was only 140 women, they were looking at a study of women that already had invasive breast cancer stage one through three, and the study was only done for 30 days. So the actual time that they were supplementing with soy was only 14 days.

So when you're looking at that it's really hard to come to the conclusion that they did, because you have to consider that they already have the disease, so maybe it's just progressing. Then also with a duration of 14 days, it's just not long enough to see really any outcome.

Karina Inkster: Right and so again, this drives home the point that you have to know more details, not just the headline. Who were the people who were studied? These people already have fairly progressed breast cancer. And how long was the trial, how high was the dose? All of these questions need to be in the picture before we can make really a decision.

Melissa Reilly: Exactly. So to someone who doesn't understand stats or how study designs are done, the headlines can be pretty scary.

Karina Inkster: Yeah. Well, understandably so if that's all we hear and if we don't dig into it deeper.

Melissa Reilly: Definitely.

Karina Inkster: I know that there's been some other interesting meta-analyses done in this area. Do you have any more that you could summarize for us?

Melissa Reilly: Yeah, there's a bunch. There's a recent one in 2014, and they included 30 studies. So it's pretty expansive and it included 10 cohort studies and 20 case control ones. What they found was that high soy intake presented some protective effects on breast cancer in both pre- and post-menopausal women, which is interesting because there were some studies or some speculations that it may not benefit one or the other, but this study actually found no difference between the two.

Also what they found in this study, which I thought was interesting and it kind of goes back to what we were talking about earlier, but they did find that there was publication bias in western studies. So whenever you do a meta-analysis, you do evaluate for the bias amongst all of those studies, but they didn't find that in the Asian studies. What they found was that there were actually greater protective effects in Asians versus Americans. So the hypothesis there is due to the age of exposure that I talked about earlier, because it is such a significant part of the Asian diet.

Karina Inkster: Interesting. So basically that means that perhaps, I mean this is the hypothesis it sounds like based on this study anyways, the idea is that potentially exposing people to soy earlier in life protects them from cancer more than starting soy exposure in later life or later childhood.

Melissa Reilly: Yeah and it makes sense when you think of it scientifically, because the more oxidation you have in your body, the less healthy you'll be. So if you're protecting yourself against this oxidation for your whole life, then your baseline is very healthy versus someone who's had a lifetime of poor eating habits and everything, they have to start at a much different level.

Karina Inkster: That's an interesting point. Are there any other studies in that realm before we go on to a different type of cancer?

Melissa Reilly: Yeah, there is really a lot of literature. There's a lot of literature saying that soy products actually are inversely associated with breast cancer risk, but there are tons of meta-analyses. So there's another one in 2006 that basically said the same thing. This one wasn't as large as the one that was just done, it had

18 studies, but they did adjust for a variety of confounders. They looked at age, family history, breast cancer risk, dietary factors. They really looked at a whole slew of things and even with all of those confounders, they still found that there was an inverse correlation between soy intake and breast cancer risk.

Karina Inkster: So does this kind of protective effect happen even if you have a history of breast cancer in your family? If you're predisposed to it?

Melissa Reilly: Yeah, I definitely think so. We talked earlier about the other study that specifically looked at patients that were breast cancer survivors though. So it's not just one study. They looked at it a bunch of times with patients that have breast cancer or a strong family history of it, and they still found that there was that inverse association.

Karina Inkster: Well, that's pretty legit research, especially all these metaanalyses! Honestly, it just boggles my mind why this is not common knowledge. All these studies and this research — maybe because it's not sensational enough.

Melissa Reilly: Yeah, I agree. I don't think that people are talking about it, and I think that because people are talking about all the negative stuff, no one's actually looking at the literature. No one actually does the research. So it just goes back to that misinformation.

Karina Inkster: That's crazy.

Melissa Reilly: It just keeps spreading like wildfire.

Karina Inkster: Well this is why we have professionals like you who are sharing the actual research! It really comes down to taking everything in the mainstream media with a grain of salt. It's a lot of work to do our own research, which is probably why most people don't do it, but that's why we have you doing the work for us!

Melissa Reilly: Exactly. In school they taught us the average reading level is fifth grade and now being out in the world, and practicing pharmacy, and having my own panel of patients, I really do see that that's true. The health literacy is very low. When I talk to patients, I always tell them to be their own advocate and to question their doctor. Ask, "Why am I on this medication? Why do I have to take a bunch of these?" Be your own advocate. That's so important.

Karina Inkster: Yeah, but that's kind of hard to do if people don't know where they can get information that they can trust though, right?

Melissa Reilly: Yes. That's true. Yeah.

Karina Inkster: I guess that's a whole other conversation, but yeah, ideally we would be our own advocates — but there are people advocating for crazy shit. That's the problem.

Melissa Reilly: Yeah. That's true. Knowing whom to trust.

Karina Inkster: Yeah, exactly. That can be tough, but I guess that's the importance of making sure that you're looking at things from all sides. So what we're trying to do is bust an existing myth and look at research that doesn't support it, and that supports a completely different idea.

Melissa Reilly: Yes, exactly.

Karina Inkster: So breast cancer risk, I think, is probably one of the main myths when it comes to cancer and soy, but there is some BS that I hear around prostate cancer as well: high intakes of soy being linked with higher incidences of prostate cancer. What can you tell us about that?

Melissa Reilly: We're finding that soy is really good for us in a whole bunch of different ways, pretty much for everything. Soy is just super great for everything! So yeah, breast cancer is the most talked about thing and then prostate cancer kind of came up. I'm not sure how that came to be, but anyway, there was a meta-analysis done in 2014 and they included eight randomized controlled trials, but they ended up only reviewing two for exclusion purposes. They did find evidence that supported a role for soy in prostate cancer risk reduction. It was limited by the sample size, there's only two randomized controlled trials and then the study duration, but overall they said that there was a role for it, so it's not harmful and it could be helpful.

Karina Inkster: That's an interesting point.

Melissa Reilly: Give soy a chance!

Karina Inkster: Give soy a chance, yes, absolutely. It's delicious, so why would you exclude it? There are legit reasons why someone might not want to consume it, if you've got a serious food allergy for example. I've got life-threatening food allergies. Not to soy thankfully, but if that's a legit issue then that's a good reason

to not eat soy, but all these common things that we hear about don't seem like they hold up when you really look at the work that's been done.

Melissa Reilly: Exactly.

Karina Inkster: One other type of cancer I've heard linked with soy is gastrointestinal. I don't know if there's been that much research into it, but maybe you could enlighten us on that. Has there been work that's been done on that in particular?

Melissa Reilly: Yeah. Like you said, there isn't as much on this one because it's just a random one, it's not as talked about. Like I said before, we're just finding out that soy is really good for us in a variety of ways. There was a meta-analysis for gastrointestinal cancer done very recently in 2016. They looked at 22 studies, 21 cohort, and one case control study. They also found that soy intake was inversely associated with incidence of overall G.I. cancers.

Karina Inkster: This seems to be a trend. Pretty much everything that is being researched ... even in controlled trials that have really good study design, it seems like we're finding exactly the opposite of what all these myths are telling us.

Melissa Reilly: Exactly. Even when you take a look at individual smaller studies, like if I were to individually look at these cohort and case-control studies you may not find a statistical significant difference, but you can see the overall trend is, typically, positive.

Karina Inkster: I see, that makes sense. In that case, it might not be enough to make the conclusion that soy is inversely related to cancer risk, but it is showing us that it doesn't cause cancer at least, or that it's not related to an increase in cancer risk?

Melissa Reilly: Exactly.

Karina Inkster: Interesting. Any other info in the cancer department? There's one more soy related myth that we've got on the menu, but I was just wondering if there's any other last-minute points on the cancer side?

Melissa Reilly: No, I think we've said it all.

Karina Inkster: I think so. Excellent. Lastly then, there's this myth specifically about infertility. Now, I don't know where this came from, I ask myself that question about a lot of myths, but why is there a myth that eating a lot of soy will

make you infertile? Also, is this for women and men both, or just one or the other?

Melissa Reilly: The myth comes from something several decades ago in a small region, a small farming region. This farmer had sheep that were infertile, and so they were doing research on it. It took them another couple decades to figure it out, but where the sheep were grazing was a very specific type of clover that has a very high amount of phytoestrogen in it. What this kind of clover was, I don't remember, but it's not something that's in our typical diet, so that's where it came from. People are like, "Oh, soy can cause infertility," but if you actually take a look at what that clover had, if you were to try to eat the same amount of phytoestrogen in that clover that would be in our products such as soy milk, you would have to drink over 1000 liters a day of soy milk, or 900 pounds of tofu a day to get that same amount of phytoestrogen.

Karina Inkster: That's crazy. 1000 liters of soy milk or 900 pounds of tofu?

Melissa Reilly: Yes. It's not possible for us to ingest that much phytoestrogen with products that we have commercially available to us here.

Karina Inkster: Yeah really, that's physically impossible.

Melissa Reilly: Yeah. Even as much as I love soy I wouldn't be able to do that! There have been studies on it and, again, they didn't find that this was true, but there was a meta-analysis in 2010 that specifically looked at men. They included 15 placebo-controlled treatment groups, and they found that neither soy products nor isoflavone supplements altered the reproductive hormones in men. They were looking at testosterone, so they didn't find that it altered it whatsoever.

Karina Inkster: Interesting. I would assume that when they're using isoflavone supplements in a study it's pretty high, levels that you probably also wouldn't find in food.

Melissa Reilly: Yes, exactly. They tested a variety of doses, and still found that it wasn't so.

Karina Inkster: It's like research that I've seen on ... there's this myth out there that fructose will lead to fat gain, and when you look at the studies that have found that it's these ridiculous amounts that have been given to the study participants, which is similar to this thousand liters of soy milk. It's basically like, "Hey, here's

the equivalent of 100 cups of strawberries." You're never going to eat that in real life.

Melissa Reilly: Right.

Karina Inkster: Again, it comes down to asking, what the heck was actually studied? What did they compare? What's the dose? All those important questions.

So the point is not just that soy has no effect on cancer, or on man boobs, or on any of this stuff — it's actually that it's a positive thing, right?

Melissa Reilly: Yeah, definitely.

Karina Inkster: How would you summarize for our listeners your view on soy?

Melissa Reilly: Like you said, the literature is really only showing positive things even if it's not saying that it cures cancer, or anything like that. It's not causing cancer, and it really doesn't seem to be harmful at all. There's a lot of evidence showing that it's been helpful for us and, like you said, it's delicious, so I definitely am pro-soy, I am on team soy all the way.

Karina Inkster: Obviously, I am too! It's a fantastic source of protein, so people who are athletes, such as yourself, will need that to fuel training, and it's a good quality protein as well. Unless you have a legitimate allergy or medical condition, then I'd say go for it.

Melissa Reilly: Yes, agreed.

Karina Inkster: That's awesome. Thank you so much for teaching us about the work has been done, and what was studied. I think it's really important not only to know about the research that's out there, but also to be able to share it with other people in a way that makes sense.

The moral of our evidence-based story here is that soy isn't just harmless — it's actually extremely beneficial. It's a very high quality protein which, of course, is important for us vegan athletes. Unless you're legitimately allergic to soy, there's no reason to leave it out of your diet.

#### Research studies:

Meta-analysis of Soy Intake and Breast Cancer Risk (Trock, Clarke, & Clarke, 2006)

Association between Soy Isoflavone Intake and Breast Cancer Risk for Pre- and Post-Menopausal Women: A Meta-Analysis of Epidemiological Studies (Chen et al., 2004)

Effect of Dietary Soy on Breast Cancer Recurrence and Mortality: A Review (Prasad & Shayne, 2016)

Meta-analysis of Soy Consumption and Gastrointestinal Cancer Risk (Lu et al., 2017)

Soy Consumption and Prostate Cancer Risk in Men: a Revisit of a Meta-Analysis (Yan & Spitznagel, 2009)

## Travelling as a vegan

Here are some additional insights on vegan travel, as mentioned in this podcast episode.

Arden says, "Full veganism is rare and not well conceptualized in Japan. You have to be able to say vegetarian in Japanese to get anywhere so it can be hard, but there are still a ton of options. There's every kind of tofu under the sun. Plenty of vegan restaurants in big cities and almost every convenience store has vegan onigiri, which is rice balls and salad, but you have to learn at least the Kanji for meat, fish, milk and egg to read labels. For those who can afford it, there's shojin ryori, multi-course and extravagantly prepared Buddhist cuisine that just happens to be vegan for religious reasons. The best vegan eateries that I've been to are all in the Kansai region, mainly Osaka and Kyoto. I use Happy Cow to find restaurants when I can afford it, and otherwise basically just eat convenience store and grocery store food."

Kaylin has some awesome tips for us. She and her husband run the vegan deli here in Powell River, called 7 Sprouts Plant-Based Deli. So I asked Kaylin, "What sort of foods do you pack when you travel by plane or by car?" And she says, "This depends if I'm alone or with kids and what kind of trip I'm taking alone to another country outside of North America.

Granola bars, trail mix, meal replacement powder, dried fruit, peanut butter, and always some chocolate with my kids. They usually get a travel box with many compartments, which I fill with anything I have on hand. Seitan, vegan cheese, fruit, veggies, nuts, seeds, cookies, dry cereal, anything that is easy and fun for them to eat while stuck in the car."

I asked Kaylin, "What cultures have you visited where veganism is extremely rare and far from the norm? How did you deal with this?" And she said, "Well, I travelled across Africa for almost three months, about 10 years ago. Some places have literally nothing to eat, never mind vegan grub. So you learn to throw together what you can find and season it as best you can. I was travelling with a

group and we took turns cooking and each group had a budget appropriate to the country.

We had to feed everyone, usually around \$1 to \$4 per person for three to five meals. It was actually pretty awesome most of the time because the vegan food ended up being cheaper almost every time and so I was able to convince my group on several occasions to just make a vegan dish for everyone. We had to get uber creative a lot of the time and I love that sort of thing. When we ate out, I would always have to modify what I ordered and people were usually extremely confused why a white girl would only want veggies. In most of these countries, meat is seen as a pretty big luxury, so to turn it down was downright puzzling to most people. As a backup, I always carried my emergency pouch of seeds, nuts and dried fruit in my purse that I could add to salad or rice in a pinch if nothing else was available.

Something I found very useful was talking to locals and finding out about food staples that way. For example, in Egypt they have this wonderful street bread that's cheap and everywhere and after speaking with a lot of locals, I confirmed it was in fact vegan. Getting this stuff with sauteed veggies on the street was a dream come true. Once you chat with people enough, you learn what they eat regularly and actually a lot of it is vegan. It's not the stuff that's for sale on the street or in restaurants because they often think it's basic and not what the tourists want. In reality, a lot of those staples are exactly what a vegan wants, like hominy, injera, cassava, etc. I'd also hunt at each supermarket we went to for accidental vegan food. I found a brand of canned curry in Kenya that was vegan and that was carried in many stores in Eastern Africa, so I stocked up on those every few weeks for emergency food.

Canned curry on toast is actually not too bad. I also travelled to Southeast Asia but found it easier than African countries, so long as you don't mind being patient and having long conversations to explain what you want. For example, I ordered a veggie taco in Thailand, asked for no meat, just veggies and tomatoes and got a hard shell filled with pasta and tomato sauce. I learned that more explanation was needed. Europe was by far the easiest with lots of vegan options in most places. In Italy it was a little challenging and I did eat a lot of margarita pizza without the cheese while there."

So I asked Kaylin, "What kind of prep do you do to ensure you'll be able to eat vegan while travelling?" And she says, "When I went to Cuba I had a letter in

Spanish written to explain what I ate and took it everywhere with me. While it puzzled most restaurants ('crazy girl', they would mumble in Spanish), it worked and they accommodated me.

I usually do some research on places to go, but I'm more concerned with knowing where there might be an open air market to get fruit, veg, and fresh spices from. You can make a pretty kick-ass meal with very little money and planning when everything is fresh and delicious. Every time I've travelled out of North America, with the exception of Cuba, I have been backpacking and sleeping in a tent, roughly 27 countries this way, so I have to plan to eat with a little to no way to cook it. I grew up camping a lot, so I'm fairly handy in these situations, but I tell ya, it can be slightly overwhelming when you're preparing a meal for 25 people with one gas camp burner and hyenas howling nearby.

In these situations, one-pot meals like stew or curries are ideal."

My last question for Kaylin was, "What's the most difficult vegan travel situation you've been in?" And she says, "When we were in Zimbabwe, the majority of people I was travelling with went to a game restaurant. Mentally and emotionally, this was very difficult for me. I stayed at camp while they went out to feast on the very animals we had been admiring in the wild the same day. In ways it made it hard for me to fully bond with my fellow travellers and being the only vegan on the trip, I often felt isolated, especially around mealtimes. Another hard one was keeping bugs out of my food almost everywhere in Africa. Eating outside in the dark with a headlamp on made us prime targets for large beetles to fly at full speed. I unfortunately now know what a beetle tastes like and I can tell you it's not a protein source I'll ever be adopting.

Other tips, I've already touched on this, but visit markets and talk to locals. The selection is mind-blowing in most places and you're supporting locals directly. There is usually a meat and fish area, but you can smell it a mile away so it's generally easy to steer clear of. I also wouldn't bank on someone telling you something is vegan. People often don't understand this word and are also out to make a buck, so they will happily agree that it's what you want. I ask for ingredients if it's not obvious and if anything seems off, I don't get it. People often say to me, 'it's too hard to be vegan and travel', but I call BS on that because I've literally gone all over the world as a vegan and I've never starved. Sometimes you have to get creative and make stuff yourself. Sometimes you need to pass on

activities that just aren't vegan friendly, and sometimes you have to settle for a salad and fries, but it is possible. I'm living proof of that."

Next, we have Deborah who says, "When we travel, we tend to shop for food at grocery stores rather than relying on restaurants. When we travel by car, we take our Instant Pot and make simple one pot meals as much as possible with the convenience of frozen veggies, pop top canned beans, a bag of brown rice and a few spoonfuls of some nice herb or spice blend and some fresh fruit for dessert. We can have a substantial dinner for a fraction of the cost of dining in restaurants."

Pat says, "I have travelled to many places in an RV so I can prep my own food. I own an RV but also fly to places like Las Vegas or Orlando and pick up a rental. It's also nice to travel this way as instead of being in a hotel every night you're outside having a fire and seeing stars."

Misty says, "Travelling anywhere in Central and South America and Asia is easy, since rice, beans and fruit are always found in abundance. I always tell people to print out these vegan translation cards before they go. It's always possible to be vegan as long as there are grocery stores.

Colin says, "I am a backpacker travelling by foot or hitchhiking. I do a lot of hiking too where space and weight is a factor.

So a lot of my food is high calorie per gram. I carry a dry bag in my large backpack that contains about five kilograms of dry food. I also carry a smaller day pack that has a couple of kilos of fresh fruit and veggies. I cook most of my meals with a portable stove. When I eat out, I opt for super fresh and green meals to revitalize. I pack most of my dry food in Ziploc bags and use bulk bins to restock. This allows me to save space and not have too much of one thing." So in his dry bag, he has things like oats, flaked barley, millet, wheat flakes, chia, flax meal, hemp hearts, dried fruits, peanuts, walnuts, almonds, cashews, sunflower seeds, parboiled brown rice, quinoa, quinoa pasta, soba noodles, different types of

lentils, split peas, dried vegetable flakes, seaweed, many different spices, vegetable stock powder greens, powder nutritional yeast. He even has loose leaf tea and dark chocolate and B12 tablets. And then in his day pack he has pita bread, peanut butter, bananas, apples, oranges, whatever fresh veg is on special – things that he can eat in a day or two. Usually potatoes, yams, carrots, zucchini, tomato, Brussels sprouts, things like that. He says things that take the heat and don't squish. "I mix it up to get all my vitamins."

So when I asked him what cultures he has visited where veganism is extremely rare, he says, "I hitched to the Arctic ocean through the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Many people hunt and share their caribou and fish. I packed two weeks' worth of dry food in anticipation in a small Arctic town. I met a lovely couple and they took me out to a restaurant. There were no vegan options, so I ate hot chips." (I assume that's French fries by the way.)

"It's one meal. Big deal. Right? When the server asked if I wanted dessert, I said, no thanks, assuming there was nothing for me. She knew I was vegan. She came back with a "beaver tail" [fried pastry] on the house assuring me it was vegan. Apparently there's a little fresh milk and this dessert was made with coconut milk. The thing was drizzled with dark chocolate sauce and was to die for. I was so grateful."

Then I asked, "What kind of prep do you do to ensure you'll be able to eat vegan while travelling?" And Colin says, "Well, I don't do any additional prep as I carry my own food. I usually tell hosts I am vegan prior to travel so they don't prep non-vegan meals for me. Eating out, I just go with the flow. People usually show me good vegan or veg places. All restaurants can make something vegan. If you ask nicely, fruit and veg are sold everywhere all over the world. If you have a small amount of cash, you will never go hungry. Even if you're flat broke. People are super generous and accommodating, so relax and have a good time. I never worry about food."

### **Bonus resources**

#### Articles and interviews:

- An interview I did with Dr. Scott Lear on how to form a new exercise routine, sticking to long-term habits, and why you *shouldn't* rely on motivation.
- Vegan fitness for life: creating health habits that stick. An article I wrote for *alive Magazine*.
- 5 myths about strength training for vegans. An article I wrote for VegNews magazine.
- An interview I did with comic Chuck Nice and sports broadcaster Gary O'Reilly on StarTalk Radio, on plant-based diets and athleticism (starts at 32:35).

#### Short vegan food prep videos:

- Prepping multiple salads/lunches at once.
- "Non-negotiable" items I prep every Sunday, so I can eat well during the week.
- "Bonus" items I'll prep every 2nd or 3rd week (most of this freezes well).

Here's the dhal recipe I mention in the last video. I make a large batch every second week and freeze half of it!

#### No-Bullsh!t Vegan podcast episodes:

- Scott Shetler on veganism in strength sports, working with elite athletes, and more
- My review of the "Game Changers" documentary
- Registered Dietitian Lauren McNeill on vegan protein and omega-3 fatty acids
- Dr. Sarina Pasricha on the gut microbiome. How do we improve it? Does veganism factor in?