Fact or Myth??!

1. Fact or Myth Vegetarians/Vegans do not have enough calcium in their diets.

“The most healthful calcium sources are green leafy vegetables and legumes, or “greens and beans” for short. Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, collards, kale, mustard greens, swiss chard, and other greens are loaded with highly absorbable calcium and a host of other healthful nutrients….

Dairy products do contain calcium, but it is accompanied by animal proteins, lactose sugar, animal growth factors, occasional drugs and contaminants, and a substantial amount of fat and cholesterol in all but the defatted versions….

To keep it [calcium] there…reduce calcium losses by avoiding excess salt….get your protein from plants, not animal products…don’t smoke.”

(Physicians Committee for responsible Medicine)

1. Fact or Myth Vegetarians/Vegans do not have enough protein in their diets.

“Amino acids, the building blocks of protein, can be synthesized by the body or ingested from food. There are 20 different amino acids in the food we eat, but our body can make only 11 of them. The 9 essential amino acids which cannot be produced by the body must be obtained from the diet. A variety of grains, legumes, and vegetables can provide all of the essential amino acids our bodies require.” (Physicians Committee for responsible Medicine)

1. Fact or Myth Vegetarians/Vegans do not have enough iron in their diets.

Iron is needed to make hemoglobin and is found in meats, eggs, legumes, whole grains, green leafy vegetables, dried fruit.

1. Fact or Myth Vegetarians/Vegans do not have enough vitamin B12 in their diets.

“Vitamin B12 is necessary for proper red blood cell formation, neurological function, and DNA synthesis. It is manufactured by certain types of bacteria found in nature. Because plants vary widely in their levels of this bacteria (and most of us favor our food scrubbed squeaky clean), we cannot rely on plant foods to meet our B12 needs. We can ensure our dietary needs are met by consuming supplements and/or fortified foods.” (Boston Vegan Association)

1. Fact or Myth Vegetarians/Vegans cannot eat ANYTHING!

Vegans eat just about anything! They will not eat anything that comes from and animal: meats, eggs, milk, butter, creams, etc. However, they eat lots of vegetables to replace these foods and especially lots of whole grains like rice, millet, and quinoa.

1. Fact or Myth Vegetarians/Vegans should take a multivitamin.

Vegetarians should take a multivitamin regularly as to be ensured that their dietary needs are met.

1. Fact or Myth Meat eaters are at greater risks for heart disease, cancer, obesity, and diabetes

than vegetarians/vegans.

“According to the American Dietic Association’s 2009 Position Paper on Vegetarian Diets, vegan diets ‘are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases.’ A healthy vegan diets helps reduce your risk of heart disease, cancer, obesity, and diabetes.” (Boston Vegan Association).

1. Fact or Myth Being vegan/vegetarian is more expensive than being a meat eater.

False! After you’ve made the initial investment to stock your pantry (about $300), the cost of living vegetarian/vegan is equivalent to the typical meat eater.

1. Fact or Myth Humans were meant to be meat eaters.

Debatable: the human anatomy is more similar to an herbivore than an omnivore or carnivore. For instance humans have long intestines unlike omnivores/carnivores who have short intesines. The pH of our stomach, like herbivores, is 4-5, while the typical omnivore/carnivore stomach is at a pH of 1. Lastly, our mouths have broad, flattened, and spade shaped teeth, while carnivores have sharp pointed teeth. (Massachusetts Animal Rights Coalition)

1. Fact or Myth “Free-Range” means the animal in the freezer lived a good life until its death.

False. All the USDA certification of “free-range” means is that the animals had access to the outdoors, but no other criteria need to be met for meat to be considered “free-range.” (Vegan Outreach)