



NEW VEGAN HEALTH SUPPLEMENT

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We have been working for some time with Vegan Society trademark holder HealthPlus, manufacturers of the Veganicity range (see opposite page), to produce a supplement specifically designed for vegans of all ages.

A varied vegan diet centred on whole plant foods provides plenty of the vast majority of nutrients, with a rich variety of beneficial antioxidants and other plant substances and healthfully low levels of saturated fat, cholesterol and toxic contaminants. This healthy foundation can, however, be undermined by factors relating not to vegan diets in general but to the particular environment in which we live:

- lack of vitamin B12 in sanitised but unfortified plant foods;
- insufficient sunshine to produce our own vitamin D all the year round;
- low levels of iodine and selenium in the soil.

The new supplement provides a convenient way to compensate for these factors.

Vitamin B12 and homocysteine

If we lived on wild fruits, roots, shoots and leaves, we would get enough B12 from the dirt and bugs routinely present in such foods. While most vegans get enough vitamin B12 to avoid outright deficiency, many do not get enough B12 to avoid moderately raised levels of homocysteine - a toxic natural chemical linked to increased risk of birth defects, dementia, depression and death. The supplement provides 10 micrograms (µg) of vitamin B12 - enough to reduce homocysteine to desirable levels. Fortified foods are an alternative source.

Three other B vitamins help to keep homocysteine low: folic acid, B2 (riboflavin) and B6 (pyridoxine). While most vegans get plenty of these from their diet, the EU recommended daily allowances (RDAs) are included to ensure that there is no possible weak link.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is important for healthy bones and the natural way to get it is from sunshine on our skin. But this only works

when our shadow is not much longer than we are: between October and March people in the UK must rely on stores built up in the brighter months or on vitamin D in their diet. Our supplement includes 10 micrograms of D2 - enough to keep stores adequate through the year even if sun exposure is limited.

Iodine and selenium

Soil levels of iodine and selenium are low in the UK and much of Europe, and the amounts in plants reflect the amounts in the soil.

In North America iodised salt is used while in most of Europe, including the UK and Ireland, most people get their iodine from dairy products without even realising it has been deliberately added via the cattle feed. Vegans, however, avoid the hidden supplement along with the saturated fat.

Selenium intakes in all sections of the UK population tend to be lower than ideal.

Natural plant foods such as kelp and Brazil nuts can boost intakes of iodine and selenium respectively, though an ideal but not excessive level may be hard to achieve as the amounts contained can vary significantly.

Low iodine can damage brain development in children and increase the risk of thyroid problems in adults. However, high intakes - especially a sudden change from a low to a high intake - can also trigger thyroid problems. Our supplement uses potassium iodide to provide a precisely controlled amount so that one tablet reliably and consistently provides the adult RDA of 150 µg.

Low selenium reduces antioxidant activity, increases vulnerability to infections and may increase the risk of some cancers, while very high intakes are toxic and can cause skin and hair problems. Our supplement uses selenomethionine, the usual form of selenium in plants, to provide 60 µg of selenium per day - enough to maximise its antioxidant activity and complement good vegan intakes of other antioxidants.

For more information on all the above topics, see *Plant Based Nutrition and Health*, available from The Vegan Society.

Meeting the needs of children

One tablet per day meets the needs of adults and teenagers while one every other day (or half a tablet each day) meets the needs of younger children. The amount in each tablet has been determined so as not to exceed international guidelines even for a one-year-old child.

A very small amount of sugar (about half a gram per tablet) and apple flavour have been included to make the tablets palatable and chewable, which should make the task of persuading children to take them a lot easier.

Purchasing the supplement

The tablets can be purchased direct from the Vegan Society at just £4.99 plus p&p for three months adult supply (90 tablets). We have kept the price low by ordering in bulk, using simple packaging and charging below the normal RRP.

We hope that members and others will find this product a simple and affordable way to promote excellent health for themselves and their families.

Directions: One tablet daily for adults, half a tablet for children under 12. Do not exceed recommended intake.

Each tablet will provide (% of EU RDA):
 Vitamin B2_1.6mg (100%) Vitamin D_10µg (200%)
 Vitamin B6_2mg (100%) Iodine_150µg (100%)
 Folic Acid_200µg (100%) Selenium_60µg (N/A)
 Vitamin B12_10µg (1000%)

Ingredients: Sugar, Dextrose, Acacia, Selenomethionine (Selenium), Stearic Acid, Flavour (Apple), Ergocalciferol Preparation (D2), Pyridoxine Hydrochloride (B6), Magnesium Stearate, Riboflavin (B2), Folicin (Folic Acid), Potassium Iodide (Iodine), Cyanocobalamin (B12)

Store in a cool, dry place. Keep out of reach of children. Food supplements should not be used as a substitute for a healthy varied diet.

Produced for The Vegan Society
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**Suitable for everyone
Perfect for vegans**