

What Has Dr. Shook Been Reading?

The Vegetarian Female: A guide to a Healthier Diet For Women of All Ages

By Anika Avery-Grant, RD

“Achieve Sensible Weight Loss, Prevent Osteoporosis, Reduce the Risk of Cancer, Lower Cholesterol Levels, Reverse Heart Disease, Increase Longevity and More.”

So says the cover of *The Vegetarian Female*.

Author, Anika Avery-Grant, R.D. (Registered Dietitian) has been a vegetarian all of her life and a vegan her adult life. She chose to be a vegan for personal and environmental health, consideration of animal welfare and for reasons of religion.

The title, *The Vegetarian Female* might lead one to believe that this is a book about vegetarianism or a diet free of animal flesh. However by page 24 Anika Avery-Grant has discarded milk and eggs as viable foods and moves on to promote a diet free of all animal foods ... a vegan diet.

From livestock to tuna, Ms Avery-Grant strongly opposes the use of animal flesh for food and is quick to pronounce all animal food sources to be harbingers of excessive hormones, antibiotics, pesticides, heavy metals and nasty food born illnesses. There is an emphasis on animal cruelty, environmental destruction, world famine, epidemic chronic health problems and transmigration of the soul. Cattle, pig and chicken farms are described as environmentally damaging and excessively cruel to animals. Milk is declared unnecessary for the adult, eggs too full of saturated fat and both to be primary contributors to the development of heart disease.

The Vegetarian Female continues as an excellent guide for obtaining proper nutrition from a plant based diet. There is useful information on balancing food groups to avoid nutrient deficiencies through childhood and adolescence, pregnancy and menopause. Suggestions are made concerning the possible need for vitamin and mineral supplementation and/or a consultation with a vegan dietitian. The impact of diet on high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis and cancer is discussed at length with an emphasis on the negative affects of a high protein meat based diet and (of course) the positive affects of a plant based vegan diet.

Also provided are easy to read nutrition tables, charts, references, suggested reading and the recommendation of several cookbooks.

When I bought this book I was hoping to answer a question posed by one of my patients ...” How can I see to it that my 14 year old daughter who insists on being a vegetarian is getting all the nutrients she needs to sustain her growing body and athletic life style?” *The Vegetarian Female* provided that answer. It should also help momma to understand why her daughter has made this dietary choice.

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