



## How can I stick to a vegan diet and maintain energy levels throughout the day?

**Suzie Sawyer says:** "The main potential issue with a vegan diet is getting sufficient protein, plus particular nutrients such as vitamin B12 and iron both of which are key to energy. However, by combining protein-rich foods such as beans, lentils (cook with mushrooms and aubergines for spaghetti bolognese), quinoa (great with roasted vegetables) tofu, soya and other grains at every meal, protein needs can be met. Vitamin B12 is only found in animal products and nutritional yeast, so eating fortified foods, and taking a supplement will ensure this essential nutrient, and therefore energy levels, are maintained. Iron can be found in dark green leafy vegetables, dried fruits, beans and wholegrains (how about green bean curry with wholegrain brown rice?) and you could also take a multivitamin and mineral supplement."

## What changes can I make to my lifestyle to help reduce my chances of suffering a stroke?

**Dr Emma Derbyshire says:** "As well as taking regular exercise, a healthy balanced diet is crucial. Include at least one portion (140g) of omega-3-rich oily fish in your weekly diet, as the fatty acids are thought to reduce the chance of arteries becoming blocked while also lowering blood pressure. If you don't like the taste of fish, you could try an omega-3 supplement like Equazen. It goes without saying, too, that you need to eat plenty of fruit and vegetables for a low fat, high fibre diet. Make sure that you monitor salt intake and keep saturated fat to a minimum. There's good news for tea drinkers, too, as recent research from the Netherlands suggests that drinking between three and five cups of black or green tea a day is associated with a reduced risk of stroke and heart disease among other health benefits."



## I want to reduce the amount of alcohol I drink as I currently drink with every evening meal. What do you advise?

**Dr Judith Holmes says:** "Drinking in the evenings easily becomes habit, often leading to consumption of far more alcohol than you realise. An average bottle of wine contains 10-12 units of alcohol. This is only slightly less than the recommended weekly maximum of 14 units for males and females. Regularly drinking more than this will undoubtedly have adverse effects on your health. Managing your alcohol intake will be much easier if you can encourage your family to come on board - perhaps you could suggest some of these changes to them:

- Set a limit for the evening before your first drink
- Try not to drink before a certain time each day and perhaps consider some alcohol free days each week
- Try to space out your alcoholic drinks with soft drinks
- Try a new tippie: prosecco and champagne are generally lighter in calories than wine and beer
- Spirits with slimline mixers are a good option for a longer drink with fewer units and calories consumed.



## Our Experts



Dr Tim Bond is an advisor to the Tea Advisory Panel,

[teaadvisorypanel.com](http://teaadvisorypanel.com)



Dr Gill Jenkins is a GP and an adviser to HSIS, the Health and Food

Supplements Information Service, [hsis.org](http://hsis.org)



Suzie Sawyer is a clinical nutritionist at [feelaliveuk.com](http://feelaliveuk.com)



Dr Emma Derbyshire is a Public Health Nutritionist and

an advisor to Equazen and Hermesetas, [hermesetas.co.uk](http://hermesetas.co.uk)



Dr Judith Holmes runs a private GP service at Spire

Parkway Hospital in Solihull

1 Setting alcohol-free days can help reduce your overall intake 2 Keeping hydrated includes fluid intake from your food as well as drink 3 Top up your levels of zinc to help support your immune system and avoid colds and flu. 4 Eating oily fish and drinking black tea can help to reduce the risk of stroke 5 Getting enough protein, iron and B12 is key to keeping up energy levels when following a plant-based diet