

Webinar 9 Handout:
PROS & CONS OF SPECIALTY DIETS

Here's a quick refresher on the pros and cons of several common specialty diets. Discuss these factors with clients who are interested in pursuing one of these lifestyles.

Vegetarian

PROS	CONS
Low intake of saturated fat and cholesterol	Possible deficiency in B12, calcium, iron, and omega-3 fatty acids
Higher intake of fiber	Can be a difficult lifestyle on the go
High intake of fruits and vegetables	Protein intake requires more attention
High intake of whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds	Less variety means possibility of eating more processed foods
Typically have lower LDL and blood pressure	
Typically have lower mortality rates	
Typically have fewer incidences of diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and other chronic diseases	

Vegan

PROS	CONS
High intake of fruits and vegetables	Possible deficiency in B12, calcium, iron, and omega-3 fatty acids
High intake of whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds	Can be a difficult lifestyle on the go and in social settings

Consume less saturated fat and cholesterol	Can be costly, as many vegan products are expensive
Lower body weight is typical	Less variety means possibility of eating more processed foods
Consume more fiber	Protein intake requires more attention
Lower risk of diseases such as diabetes, cancer, heart disease and other chronic diseases	
Typically have lower LDL and blood pressure	

Raw

PROS	CONS
Diet free of additives, refined sugars, alcohol, preservatives, and caffeine	Bigger risk for deficiencies in vitamin B12 and D, calcium, iron, omega-3's, and protein
Raw foods retain many nutrients	Eating adequate nutrients requires more attention
Extremely low intake of saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium	Higher risk for developing foodborne illnesses
High intake of fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants	Some foods have greater health properties when cooked/frozen because the phytochemicals present in them are more easily absorbed
	Less variety means possibility of eating more repetitive diet
	Difficult lifestyle on the go and in social settings

Paleo

PROS	CONS
Cuts out most processed foods which eliminates added sugars, artificial trans fats, refined carbohydrates, and sodium	Excludes dairy products, legumes, and grains making it difficult to get adequate amounts of calcium and vitamin D
Focused on plants and lean meat, particularly grass-fed beef, which has higher levels of omega-3s	Can be hard to get adequate fiber
Promotes drinking tons of water throughout the day	Many can misinterpret the paleo diet and incorporate high fat meats such as marbled beef and sausage