

[IMAGE]

## Plant vs. Animal: The Hard Truth

By Editorial Staff

Plant protein is trending, but is there any tangible benefit when it comes to your health? After all, many people choose plant over animal for ethical reasons, with health benefits coming in a distant second. Well, here's the hard truth, and it comes courtesy of a new study in *JAMA Internal Medicine*: eating more plant protein can help you live longer.

Researchers tracked more than 400,000 men and women for 16 years, finding that "greater dietary plant protein intake was associated with reduced overall mortality in both sexes"; overall death and death by cardiovascular disease or stroke. What's more, "Replacement of 3% energy from various animal protein sources with plant protein was associated with 10% decreased overall mortality in both sexes."

The average participant who ate more plant protein as more likely to have a lower body-mass index and total energy intake (calories); higher fiber, fruit and vegetable intake; be more physically active; use vitamin supplements; and not smoke compared to consumers of animal protein. However, it's important to note that the researchers adjusted their findings to account for all of these and other variables. That means the reduced mortality risk associated with eating more plant protein held true even after considering other factors that impact health.

*Note:* Keep in mind that with the proliferation of plant-based products these days, it's important to understand that not all plant protein is created equal. For example, eating a cup of whole-food lentils or chickpeas could be healthier than eating a highly processed, high-fat plant "burger," despite both being plant-based protein sources. Talk to your doctor for more information.

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