

Is a vegetarian diet safe for my baby?



Vegetarian diets are those that exclude, totally or partially, foods of animal origin.

There are different kinds of vegetarian diets

Flexitarian



Occasionally includes meat or fish



Lacto-ovo-vegetarian



Excludes meat or fish but includes eggs and dairy products



Vegan



Excludes all food from animal origin



THE RISK OF NUTRIENT DEFICIENCIES INCREASES PROPORTIONALLY WITH THE DEGREE OF FOOD RESTRICTION

Vegetarian/vegan diets can be safe for infants and toddlers when parents **follow nutritional recommendations from health care professionals**. Depending on the type of vegetarian diet that is to be followed **supplementation of some (micro)nutrients (especially vitamin B₁₂) may be needed**.

However, there is **insufficient evidence** in the scientific literature on the long-term **health** effects of a vegetarian or vegan diet.

Important considerations to avoid nutritional deficiencies

- A vegetarian/vegan diet needs to be carefully designed and monitored by a healthcare professional.
- Some important nutrients need special attention.
- Fortified foods and supplements will be essential to maintain adequate nutrient intake.

