



Plant-Based Performance

Thriving on a vegetarian or vegan diet

You can absolutely train, perform and stay healthy on a plant-based diet. Research shows no clear performance disadvantage, but it does take a little more planning to cover the nutrients that are harder to get from plants.

The plant-based spectrum

- **Flexitarian:** mostly plant-based, with occasional meat or fish.
- **Pescatarian:** no meat or poultry, but fish, and often eggs and dairy.
- **Lacto-ovo vegetarian:** no meat or fish, but eggs and dairy.
- **Vegan:** plant foods only, with no animal products or by-products.

Nutrients to plan for

Nutrient	Why it matters	Plant sources
Protein	Muscle, repair, immunity	Beans, lentils, soya and tofu, grains, nuts, seeds (vary across the day)
Vitamin B12	Energy, nerves, blood (vegan risk)	Fortified foods, or a supplement
Iron	Oxygen transport and energy	Wholegrains, lentils, dried fruit, leafy greens, nuts
Calcium	Bones and teeth	Fortified alternatives, tofu, beans, sesame, almonds, figs
Omega-3	Heart and brain health	Flax, walnuts, rapeseed oil, algae supplements
Vit D, zinc, iodine	Immunity, bones, thyroid	Fortified foods, sunlight, and supplements if needed

Protein, in practice

Athletes on any diet need 1.2 to 2.0 g of protein per kg. Plant eaters do not need special combinations at each meal, just a variety of sources across the day. Around a workout a slightly larger serving helps, since plant proteins can be a little lower in some amino acids.

A well-planned plant-based diet performs. The key word is planned. Cover the at-risk nutrients (B12, iron, calcium, omega-3, vitamin D), eat enough, and get variety, and there is no need to compromise on training or health.

Where to learn more: the NHS, the British Dietetic Association (BDA) plant-based pages, and the British Nutrition Foundation. A B12 supplement is advised on a vegan diet, and others may be needed, so check with your GP.

This leaflet is general nutritional guidance for education only. It is not medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, and it does not replace advice from your GP or a registered dietitian. Always check with a qualified professional before making significant changes, particularly if you have a health condition, are pregnant, or take medication.

Ready to take the next step? Book a free call or start your food diary analysis at performancenutritionlondon.co.uk