



Food FOODS FOR WEIGHT LOSS

# 11 Vegetarian Meals That Are Just As Filling As Meat

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just want to eat fewer animals, there are plenty of good reasons to go vegetarian at least part of the time. But if you're used to relying on steak, pork, and chicken to fill you up, you might find that going meatless leaves your tummy rumbling. It doesn't have to be that way.

"Meats are filling because they're comprised of protein or protein and fat, and protein takes 4-6 hours to digest compared to 1-4 hours for carbohydrates," says Lyssie Lakatos, RDN, a nutritionist, certified trainer, and co-author of *The Nutrition Twins' Veggie Cure*. "Many meat lovers are afraid a non-meat meal won't fill them up, but vegetarian recipes can be really hearty and satiating—provided they contain both protein and fiber, which keeps you feeling satisfied by slowing [digestion](#) just like protein and fat do."

Here are 11 meal ideas that fit the bill perfectly. (Heal your whole body with [Rodale's 12-day liver detox for total-body health](#))



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## 1. Pulse tacos

Skip the beef or chicken in favor of tacos stuffed with protein- and fiber-rich pulses like lentils, beans, or chickpeas. [New research from the University of Copenhagen](#) found that meals made with pulses were actually more filling than those made with animal protein. "Add fiber-packed veggies and a corn tortilla and it's especially hearty and satiating," says Lakatos, who likes to top [tacos with avocado for some healthy fat](#).







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## 2. Tex-Mex sweet potatoes

Bake a sweet potato—it's a great source of fiber, as well as vitamin A, vitamin B6, and potassium—and stuff it with black beans or chickpeas, cheese, corn, cilantro, and salsa, says Lakatos.

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### 3. Mushroom, lentil, and potato stew

This combination is super satisfying for a few reasons, says Lakatos. The lentils provide fiber and protein, while "mushrooms are a great substitution for meat since they offer a similar mouth feel." [Try this recipe from USA Pulses.](#) (Here are [5 ways to sneak more fiber into your diet.](#))





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## 4. Three-bean chili

With all the spices and [tomatoes](#), you might not even miss the beef, says Roberta Anding, RDN, a registered dietician with Baylor College of Medicine. "Add guacamole or sliced avocado for extra creaminess."

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## 5. Pulse pasta

It's perfect for anyone who's gluten-free or just needs some extra protein. Culinary nutritionist Jackie Newgent, RDN, likes [Tolerant Organic Red Lentil Pasta](#). Top it with your favorite tomato sauce and veggies. ([Here's how lentils can supercharge your weight loss.](#))





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## 6. Pasta with lentil "meatballs"

If you just can't get used to the taste of wheat-less pasta that's OK (provided you don't have celiac disease). Use regular pasta, but top it with a beef replacement [like these lentil meatballs](#) to make sure it feels like a real meal.







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## 7. Tofu stir-fry

"Tofu is incredibly versatile, sopping up the flavor of just about anything you marinate in," says Karen Ansel, RDN, author of [Healing Superfoods for Anti-Aging](#). "One cup delivers 10 grams of high-quality, complete protein, meaning it supplies all the amino acids your body needs."





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## 8. A spicy black bean burger

It's an easy swap for a beef burger: Just add your favorite condiments and toppings, suggests Anding. (And try making [these 5 veggie burgers that won't fall apart when you grill them.](#))





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## 9. Spicy chickpea salad

[This recipe](#) is fast, easy, and loaded with filling fiber and protein.

**MORE:** [7 Surprising Ways To Get Your Sweet Fix With Chickpeas](#)







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## 10. Split pea or lentil soup

The peas or lentils offer protein and fiber, while the soup base "provides a lot of volume from fluid so it feels satisfying," says Lakatos.





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## 11. Chickpea pot pie

Who needs chicken? A quick Google search turns up numerous recipes for bird-less versions of the comforting classic. For an extra twist, add in some Indian spices like [cumin](#) and coriander and top with a [cornmeal crust like this blogger did](#).

Worried that limiting (or eliminating) meat will interfere with your efforts to build muscle? Don't be. A new study published in the [American Journal of Clinical Nutrition](#) found that people who get ample protein—whether it's from animal or plant sources—are equally able to increase muscle mass.

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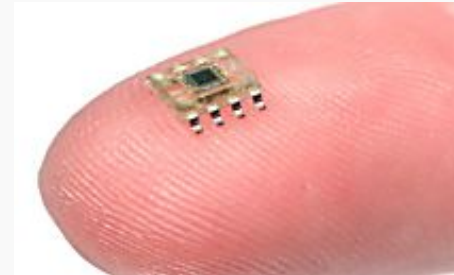
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