

## 4 Types of No-Dairy Diets

*by Pamela Fay*

A no-dairy diet excludes milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, ice cream and all other products made from cow's milk. Some people choose non-dairy diets because they cannot tolerate lactose, the sugar found in milk, or for other health reasons such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Others exclude milk because they believe that a no-dairy diet is healthier. Although these four diets are similar in their exclusion of milk products, they have key differences.

### **Macrobiotic**

A macrobiotic diet is based on Far Eastern philosophy and is intended to promote physical as well as the spiritual elements of Buddhism. The diet comprises up to 60% organic whole grains, 25% locally grown organic fruits and vegetables and 10% soups made of seaweeds, grains, vegetables and fermented soy. Dairy products, meat and sugar are discouraged, although adherents may eat limited amounts of white fish, nuts and seeds. Followers of macrobiotic diets also prepare their meals in prescribed ways, using glass, ceramic, wood, stainless steel, and enamel cookware and eschewing microwave ovens and electricity.

### **Paleo**

The Paleolithic diet, or Paleo as it is called, is based on foods that were consumed prior to agriculture and animal husbandry. It encourages the consumption of lean meat, fish, seafood, nuts, fruits and non-starchy vegetables. Quantities depend on individual preference. Paleo eliminates processed food, attributing the prevalence of modern diseases and allergies to our reliance on refined ingredients that the body does not recognize or utilize efficiently. Dairy products, sugar, beans, cereals, flours and grains—even rice—are also excluded. Perhaps one of the most difficult exclusions is salt; Paleo proponents use no salt. However, the acquired taste for salt dissipates completely upon its exclusion.

### **Vegan**

A vegan diet is another plant based diet that includes vegetables, fruits, grains, nuts and seeds. Vegans do not eat foods that come from animals. In addition to no dairy, this the exclusions include meat, fish and eggs. Strict vegans also do not use products made from animals, such as leather, silk, wool, fur and honey. Vegans may choose the lifestyle for a variety of reasons including health, environmental sustainability or because they advocate the humane treatment of animals. Vegans may replace dairy products with processed products made from soy, rice or nuts, for example almond cheese and soy milk.

### **Okinawa**

The world's longest-living people include residents of Okinawa, a chain of islands in the southernmost region of Japan. Although the traditional Okinawan diet does not include dairy, it is high in variety. The diet relies on a wide variety of plant foods, including seven servings of fruits and vegetables and seven servings of grains. The Okinawa diet

also includes two servings of soy and, for its omega 3 contribution, several servings of fish each week. Seaweed provides sufficient calcium. It is not unusual for elder Okinawans to eat 18 different types of food each day. (ref 4) For followers of the Okinawa diet, rates of obesity, heart disease and certain types of cancer fall far below U.S. statistics.

### **References**

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