

The Complete Patient Guide to the Pegan Diet

A Practical Hybrid of Paleo and Vegan for Whole-Food, Anti-Inflammatory Nutrition

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1. Introduction: What Is the Pegan Diet?

The **Pegan Diet** combines the best of two opposing dietary systems: **Paleo (ancestral, grain-free, animal-inclusive)** and **Vegan (plant-rich, ethical, anti-inflammatory)**. It is a **flexible, whole-food, plant-forward protocol** that emphasizes nutrient density, minimal processing, blood sugar stability, and sustainable eating.

2. Origins and Philosophy

Coined by Dr. Mark Hyman, the Pegan diet addresses the limitations of both Paleo and Vegan:

- From Paleo: keeps focus on ancestral, unprocessed, low-glycemic, anti-inflammatory foods

- From Vegan: emphasizes phytonutrients, fiber, environmental and ethical awareness

The result is a **moderate, sustainable plan** with high clinical utility.

3. Pegan vs Paleo vs Vegan

Category	Pegan	Paleo	Vegan
Animal Protein	Moderate (clean sources only)	High	None
Plants	75–80% of plate	Moderate	100%
Grains	Limited (GF only, low intake)	Excluded	Included
Dairy	Excluded or occasional goat	Excluded	Excluded
Legumes	Minimal (lentils, chickpeas)	Excluded	Included
Processed Food	Strictly excluded	Excluded	Often included in practice

4. Goals and Health Benefits

- Reduce systemic inflammation
- Support **blood sugar stability and hormone balance**
- Improve gut health and microbiome diversity
- Protect against chronic disease
- Promote lean mass, longevity, and cellular repair
- Encourage mindful, sustainable eating without ideology

5. Who the Pegan Diet Is For

- Patients with **chronic inflammation, metabolic syndrome, or autoimmune triggers**
- Women in **perimenopause or menopause** seeking balanced hormone support
- Individuals recovering from restrictive eating
- Patients with **digestive sensitivity to grains, dairy, or legumes**
- Anyone seeking a **sustainable, non-dogmatic whole-food diet**

6. Macronutrient Structure (Flexible 30/30/40)

Macro % of Calories	Notes
Protein 30%	Anchored in clean animal or plant options

Macro % of Calories		Notes
Fat	30%	Anti-inflammatory sources only
Carbs	40%	From low-glycemic fruits, tubers, greens

Caloric balance is flexible—target structure is satiety-based and blood sugar-aware.

7. Core Food Groups to Prioritize

Proteins

- Wild-caught fish
- Pasture-raised poultry
- Grass-fed beef (limited)
- Organic eggs
- Small amounts of lentils or legumes
- Optional: collagen peptides

Fats

- Olive oil
- Avocados
- Nuts (especially walnuts, almonds, pecans)
- Chia and flax seeds
- Coconut oil (small amounts)

Carbohydrates (Low Glycemic)

- Leafy greens, cruciferous vegetables
- Berries, pomegranates, citrus
- Sweet potatoes, carrots, beets
- Winter squash

Other Key Additions

- Fermented foods: sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir (non-dairy optional)
 - Spices: turmeric, rosemary, cinnamon, garlic
 - Broths and slow-cooked roots
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8. Foods to Eliminate or Minimize

- Gluten-containing grains
 - Refined sugars and artificial sweeteners
 - Dairy (except optional goat/sheep kefir or ghee)
 - Industrial seed oils (canola, soy, corn, safflower)
 - Processed vegan substitutes (fake meats, fake cheeses)
 - GMO soy and corn
 - Alcohol (occasional dry wine allowed)
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9. Nutrient Considerations and Caveats

- **B12:** May be low if red meat is too restricted
 - **Iron and zinc:** Watch in women with heavy cycles or postmenopausal anemia risk
 - **Calcium and D3:** May need supplementation if no dairy
 - **Omega-3s:** Emphasize EPA/DHA (from fish or algae)
 - **Choline:** From eggs or liver—supplement if absent
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10. Sample 1-Day Pegan Meal Plan

Breakfast

- 3 scrambled eggs cooked in olive oil
- Roasted sweet potatoes with turmeric
- Arugula salad with avocado and lemon

Lunch

- Grilled salmon over massaged kale and cabbage
- Tahini dressing, walnuts, cucumbers
- 1/2 cup lentils with garlic and onions

Snack

- Coconut yogurt with cinnamon and berries
- Handful of pumpkin seeds

Dinner

- Grass-fed lamb or turkey burger (no bun)
- Roasted Brussels sprouts and carrots
- Cauliflower mash with olive oil and garlic

11. Grocery List

Proteins: Salmon, lamb, turkey, eggs, lentils

Fats: Olive oil, avocado, walnuts, tahini

Veggies: Kale, cauliflower, sweet potatoes, cabbage, beets

Carbs: Berries, squash, carrots

Spices/Condiments: Turmeric, garlic, rosemary, lemon, tamari

12. Pegan in Practice: Meal Planning Tips

- Build 75% of your plate with plants
 - Protein should be **clean, traceable, and moderate in portion size**
 - Fats must be **non-oxidized, cold-pressed, or raw**
 - Time your meals around your energy, training, or cycle
 - Consider intermittent fasting 2–3x/week if weight maintenance is the goal
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13. Supplementation (Optional)

- **Omega-3 EPA/DHA:** 2g/day
 - **Vitamin D3/K2:** 2,000–5,000 IU/day
 - **Magnesium glycinate:** 300–400mg QHS
 - **Liposomal curcumin:** inflammation support
 - **Digestive enzymes** (if reintroducing legumes or raw veg)
 - **Methylated B-complex** (if low energy or mood)
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14. Lifestyle Synergy

- Walk after meals
 - Resistance training 3x/week
 - 8+ hours of quality sleep
 - Morning light exposure
 - Mindful eating and breathwork
 - Monthly 24-hour reset fast (if medically appropriate)
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15. Final Thoughts

The Pegan Diet avoids extremes. It gives patients the **structure of Paleo** and the **nutrient-density of Veganism** without the dogma of either. For inflammation, weight balance, hormone support, and metabolic aging—it's one of the most **clinically flexible frameworks** available.

16. Medical Disclaimer

This guide is intended solely for **educational and informational purposes** and does not constitute medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. The information provided herein is general in nature and is not a substitute for professional medical judgment, advice, or care from your physician or healthcare provider.

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