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## Being A Raw Versus Cooked Food Vegan

As with all things, being a vegan is an evolutionary process.

Many who begin as cooked food vegans evolve into raw food vegans. Then, of course, there are those who opt to remain cooked vegans, which is generally a matter of individual preference and often primarily depends on where one is in his or her journey. Some are in a place where they can stand to make more of a dietary sacrifice, while others are happy with the status quo and don't feel the need to be any more extreme, so to speak.

Either way, there are certainly pros and cons for both as well as a fair share of differences. For one, maintaining a cooked vegan diet, at first glance, appears to be more convenient as it requires only that one omit all meat and meat products and eat only plant-based foods whether cooked or raw. Meanwhile, a raw vegan diet consists of the same with the exception of the state of the food. Specifically, raw vegans eat only uncooked plant-based foods. The term 'uncooked' means that the food has not been heated above 118 degrees, which is said to destroy the food's nutrients, minerals and enzymes.

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Essentially, a raw food vegan diet consists of one that is at least 75 percent uncooked, unprocessed, fresh, natural fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, some seaweeds and juices. The remaining 25 percent of the diet generally consists of plant-based foods that have either been cooked above 118 degrees and/or are minimally processed.

For many cooked food vegans the observation of such restrictions proves to be unbearably challenging and admittedly so. However, the source of the challenge is mainly external, specifically with regards to how others perceive raw foodists. Raw vegans are often viewed as extremists. Yet, unlike cooked food vegans who are viewed this same way by non-vegans, raw vegans are viewed this way by both non-vegans and vegans alike.

Nonetheless, despite the perceptions of this group of nutrition enthusiasts, most who try it admittedly experience improved health, the need for less medications, healthy weight loss and weight management, improved vision, enhanced moods and most commonly, increased energy. Increased energy is usually due to the fact that a raw food diet enables the body to absorb more nutrients from food which translates into more energy. Also, with fewer toxins being absorbed, the body

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exerts less energy trying to process and digest foods and substances that it doesn't recognize, subsequently freeing up a lot of energy.

Either way you look at it there are vast benefits to both. A cooked vegan diet is more convenient and a lot healthier than most alternatives, whether meat or dairy-based. However, it is no match for a nutrient-dense raw food diet.

Amirah Bellamy is a Vegan Coach, Vegan Fitness Meal Planning Expert, and Author. To learn more about her fabulous Vegetarian Meal Plans, purchase her infamous eBook "The 50¢ Book That's Hotter Than 50 Cent," or INSTANTLY grab her FREE Vegetarian Starter Kit go to [www.AmirahBFit.com](http://www.AmirahBFit.com)

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