

Now incorporating
SIMPLY *Vegan*

The UK's best-selling vegan magazine

Vegan Food & LIVING

AUGUST 2020

Perfect
PICNICS

Enjoy lunch in the sun with
tasty recipes for salads,
sandwiches & dips

KALE PESTO & RICE
WRAPS - P22

75
PLANT-BASED
RECIPES

VEGAN FASHION

Find out what's
wrong with wool
+ shop the
latest vegan
footwear trend

**COOK YOUR
OWN FAKEAWAYS**

- > 7-ingredient Thai dishes
- > 30-minute curries
- > Chinese classics made vegan

COOL DOWN

with refreshing vegan
ice cream and ice pops

MAKE AN ECO CHANGE

Eco-anxiety - is it real and
how can you cope with it?

GET GREEN FINGERS

Grow your own, no matter
how much space you have

Cooking for kids

Focus on maple
Vegan vs cholesterol

ANTHEM
PUBLISHING



AUGUST 2020
VEGAN FOOD
& LIVING
PRICE £4.99

Environmentally TOXIC

Gemma Hurditch from the College of Naturopathic Medicine discusses the effect of environmental toxins on your body

Environmental toxins (poisons in our immediate surroundings) are found in the air we breathe, the food we eat and the water we drink and bathe in. They are implicated in many diseases, including cancer, high blood pressure, depression, anxiety and falling fertility rates. Environmental toxins come from car exhausts, cigarette smoke, home furnishings and beauty products. Some toxins we have been aware of for some time – such as asbestos in buildings, lead in plumbing, arsenic from human industrial and mining activities – and others are more recent additions to the list of potential poisons; plastics, silicosis from engineered stone, perfume or fragrance chemicals, 5G and electromagnetic frequency (EMF) pollution, chemicals in medications... the list goes on. Avoiding all environmental toxins is impossible, but limiting our exposure is a worthy pursuit, and often the alternatives are not only better for us, but better for the planet.

WATER

A lot of people choose to drink bottled water, believing it to be a purer form of hydration. In reality this is often far from the truth. Water bottled in plastic is likely to contain products of leached plastic such as bisphenol-A (BPA) among a host of other chemicals, the long-term health consequences of which are poorly understood. Endocrine and fertility disruption, plus hormone-dependent cancers (for

example of the breast and prostate) are linked to these pollutants. Chemicals found in bottled water include disinfectants, industrial pollutants and bacteria. Investigate getting a quality water filter for your home, preferably at the mains, so your bathing water is also filtered, as inhaled chlorine and other treatment chemicals are damaging to health. Purchase stainless steel or glass water bottles and use your own when out and about. Think of all the plastic you'll save, too!

PLASTICS

It is worth noting that plastic chemical pollution such as xenoestrogens (oestrogen mimickers that disrupt natural hormonal patterns) can come from many sources. Plastic containers leech considerably more if heated or distressed – microwave ready-meals, hot food leftovers or takeaways added straight into the plastic container. The lining of cans and jar lids is also plastic. The non-BPA plastics that are currently all the rage are hopefully less problematic, but again, without the test of time it is difficult to know; opt for glass or ceramics to store leftovers, avoid heating foods in plastic or with clingfilm on, invest in environmentally-friendly vegan food wraps and limit tinned food, opt for fresh. Importantly, baby bottles are a potent source, so

tempered glass or medical grade silicone is a much better option for the little ones.

HEAVY METALS

Heavy metals, such as lead, are also particularly important to avoid and toxic levels can be reached much faster in smaller bodies – children. Lead affects cognition, lowers IQ, causes kidney disease and anaemia. Common sources are old plumbing and old paint used for outside areas such as windows and doors. Be mindful if renovating and check for cracking, peeling paint around the house. Having a good healthy supply of calcium by eating plenty of leafy greens, white beans, tahini and calcium-set organic, non-GMO tofu can reduce lead absorption. Taking shoes off at the door can help reduce the transportation of lead and other pollutants into our homes. Aluminium can be found in a variety of medications including





“Avoiding all environmental toxins is impossible, but limiting our exposure is a worthy pursuit”

injections, and in cookware. Avoid using aluminium cookware – opt for ceramic or tempered glass, particularly for acidic foods like tomato-based sauces, which may react with other healthy cookware options such as cast iron and stainless steel; these are fine for most other foods. Speaking of cookware, avoid Teflon – it emits noxious fumes and leeches into food. Ceramic-coated frying pans are durable and better for health.

COSMETICS AND CLEANING PRODUCTS

Our skin is our largest organ and it absorbs about 60% of what we put on it, so it is a huge entry point for toxins. Despite this, a large array of chemicals in our cleaning and beauty products lack robust safety data. Common problem ingredients include phthalates, parabens, formaldehyde, mineral oils, ‘fragrance’, sodium lauryl/laureth sulphate (SLS/SLES). These chemicals and many others found in shampoo, detergents, washing up liquid, room sprays etc are linked to health issues such as obesity, cancer, reproductive harm, nervous disorders and skin diseases. Get back to basic, greener cleaning products such as bicarbonate of soda and vinegar and diffuse only 100% organic essential oils for room freshening and perfume (do not apply undiluted essential oils on bare skin). Greener alternatives for toothpaste, deodorant and body wash that



we use every day are a great way to minimise our exposure. Check out www.safecosmetics.org and www.ewg.org/skindeep for advice and information.

MYCOTOXINS

Mould and fungal spores can be particularly problematic in damp and dark areas – including in fridges and bathrooms, but any room can be affected. People experience autoimmune issues, allergies and other health complaints related to fungal compounds. Eat only fresh unspoiled foods, clean out your fridge and washing machine seals regularly. A combination of clove essential oil and vinegar can work well against mould.

Severe mould and rising damp may need the attention of experts – discuss more natural options for resolving the problem.

PESTICIDES, FUNGICIDES AND HERBICIDES

Not eating factory farmed animal products is a great way to avoid the accumulation of toxins, but there is an alarming number of poisons found on plant produce too; ‘-cides’ are linked to many health issues such as Parkinson’s disease and asthma. It is worthwhile investigating the ‘dirty dozen’ and ‘clean fifteen’ in order to best utilise your shopping budget. Opt for spray-free options on the dirty dozen, as these are the twelve foods highest in toxic residues.

Explore organic options through your local farmers’ market or get to know your local farm shop and find out how they grow their produce. Tea and coffee are so regularly consumed it is best to go organic – and remember to use unbleached filters, as well.

DUST

House dust often contains dust mite excretions, pollen, bacteria, mould spores and pet dander, all potent

allergens. Other unwanted substances in house dust are lead, asbestos and plastics fibres, and chemicals such as PFOAs and PBDEs. Get a HEPA-filter vacuum cleaner and dust and vacuum regularly. Give the house a breather; airing out the house is important as sunlight helps kill pathogens and the air quality in our homes is often worse than that of the outdoors due to the off-gassing of carpets, furnishings, etc.

EMF

Whatever your thoughts on EMF, there is enough scientific information out there to warrant being prudent about extensive exposure. Turning off the Wi-Fi router at night, keeping your smartphone at least 2cm from your ear (and not storing it on your body or near your bed), avoiding use of Bluetooth earpieces and microwave ovens, these are basic ways to limit EMF exposure.

Other things you may want to investigate: Radon exposure in your home (naturally occurring from the ground – there is a map you can consult for areas in the UK high in radon emanations: www.ukradon.org), asbestos, till receipts (which are covered in BPA), particle board, non-toxic renovation materials (paints, flooring, etc.), flame retardants and organic cotton linen and clothing. Keep in mind that your body is a marvellous detoxifying machine and if we give it lots of locally grown, seasonal plant-based food, exercise and relaxation, we can minimise the negative effects of our modern environment. ♥



YOUR EXPERT

Naturopath Gemma Hurditch is a CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine) lecturer. CNM trains successful natural therapy professionals, online and in class. Colleges across the UK and Ireland. Visit naturopathy-uk.com or you can call 01342 410505 for more information.

