

WHAT IS THE DANIEL FAST?

The Daniel Fast is based on the prophet Daniel's spiritual and dietary experiences in the biblical book of his namesake. Two references in particular lay the foundation for the diet:

- "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables [pulses] to eat and water to drink." Daniel 1:12
- "In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled." Daniel 10:12-13

Daniel himself experienced a renewed sense of vigor and strength after following a plant-based diet for three weeks, and a modern diet plan was created based on achieving his results of greater spiritual, mental, and physical health.

While only vegetables and water are listed in the scripture, the word "pulse" in the King James Bible is defined as "bean or seed grown for food," allowing for fruits, whole grains, and other plant-based foods to be included in the diet plan.

WHAT YOU CAN EAT ON THE DANIEL FAST

The Daniel Fast is essentially a vegan diet, but don't go searching the grocery aisles for Impossible Burgers and almond milk ice cream quite yet. The fast is a whole foods, plant-based diet, emphasizing consumption of foods in their least processed form. Here's what's allowed on the menu:

FRUIT: Fresh or frozen, and low-glycemic fruits in particular are encouraged. Low-glycemic fruits include berries, apples, peaches, grapefruit, cherries, and grapes. Canned fruit is also an option, but only if there is no added sugar, coloring, or other preservatives.

VEGETABLES: Fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables are all allowed on the diet plan, as long as there is no added salt. You can eat these—and even potatoes—in abundance.

WHOLE GRAINS: Go easy on the processed varieties and focus on cooking unrefined whole grains such as amaranth, barley, brown rice, quinoa, millet, oats, and wheat. Leavened bread, or breads made with yeast, are not allowed, but if you can find whole-grain breads and flatbreads made without yeast, those do fit within the parameters of the diet plan.

LEGUMES: Dried or canned varieties are both allowed, but canned versions shouldn't have any salt or other additives. Types of legumes include black beans, chickpeas, lentils, and other bean varieties. These can also be eaten in abundance.

SOY PRODUCTS: such as tofu, are also allowed on The Daniel Fast, as long as they aren't made with any additives.

NUTS & SEEDS: All nuts and seeds are allowed, as long as they are raw or dry-roasted without salt.

HIGH-QUALITY OILS: Plant-based oils are approved on The Daniel Fast, but they should be used in moderation. Canola, peanut, coconut, olive, avocado, sesame, grapeseed, and walnut oils are all healthy options.

HERBS & SPICES: Herbs and spices will be key in flavoring your meals over the next few weeks. Investing in fresh herbs and having a host of spices to choose from will help make The Daniel Fast that much easier. Salt is allowed on the diet, but it should be used minimally.

Nutritional supplements are also allowed, as long as you aren't reaching for gummy vitamins.

WHAT YOU CAN'T EAT ON THE DANIEL FAST

MEAT & EGGS: Animal protein of any kind is not allowed during the three-week fasting plan, and meat is specifically avoided in the Book of Daniel. Instead, participants are encouraged to obtain protein from legumes, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.

DAIRY: Dairy is also not allowed on this diet, but you can substitute unprocessed or homemade non-dairy milks in recipes.

PROCESSED FOODS: Any food that is processed beyond packaging is pretty much off limits on The Daniel Fast. This includes fried foods, many frozen products, and even most vegan-friendly packaged foods. This diet is all about emphasizing whole, unprocessed foods, so you'll even need to ditch your veggie burgers, unless you can make one from-scratch with approved ingredients.

SWEETENERS: We aren't just talking sugar here, but also maple syrup, honey, and other natural sweeteners. Fruit should be your only source of sweetener here. Dates are a great option for adding sweetness to meals, and mashed banana also is a great way to sweeten a bowl of oatmeal in the mornings.

CHEWING GUM & MINTS: Since processed foods are not on the list of approved foods, you can assume fruit is your only dessert option for 21 days. Gum and mints—which often contain zero grams of sugar—are no exception on The Daniel Fast. Make sure to read nutrition facts and ingredient lists closely, as the majority of brands are made with chemical additives and sugar alcohols.

SOLID FATS: Butter, ghee, margarine, lard, and other shortenings are all off the list for three weeks, so investing in a good-quality vegetable oil will be worth your while. The only exception for solid fats here would be a nut or seed butter, as long as the nut or seed is the only ingredient.

BEVERAGES: All fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned fruit, all fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned vegetables, all whole grains, all nuts and seeds, all legumes, peas, and beans, all quality oils, healthy fats, 100% all natural fruit and vegetable juices and spring or distilled water.

For Daniel's Fasting recipes, click below.

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