Why you should eat more plant-based foods

By Angelique Tagaroulias - 11 October 2019

Looking for a quick dinner to feed the whole family?

You could spend all evening preparing a creamy, high-calorie lasagna from scratch or you could take 10 minutes and whip up a healthy meal packed with vegetables that's sure to please.

Here's why you should incorporate more plant-based foods into your diet. Recipe included.

Opting for plant over animal products is good for the planet, and research indicates it's also good for your health. One recent study published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* found that following a diet higher in plant foods (think veggies, fresh fruit, grains, nuts, seeds and legumes) and lower in animal foods is associated with a lower risk of heart disease. A sample population was observed for nearly 30 years, where participants' diets were classified into four categories of lower and higher intakes of plant foods. Those with higher adherences to a healthy plant-based diet received higher health scores.

Does that mean we all need to jump on the veganism train and ditch the milk from our morning coffee? Not quite. Simply adding plenty of unprocessed and unrefined whole foods into your diet, particularly those derived from plants, can do wonders according to Teresa Cutter, Nutritionist, Personal Trainer and Founder of the Healthy Chef.

Nourishing your body with whole foods can also reduce your risk of a number of diseases.

'One sample study of 200,000 people, published in *PLOS Medicine*, found that those who followed a plant-based diet had a 34 per cent lower risk of developing diabetes than those who followed unhealthy, non-plant-based diets,' explains Cutter.

'Plant protein provides an abundance of phytonutrients, antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and fibre — all crucial components for optimal health and wellness.'

This includes tofu, lentils, almonds, quinoa and chia seeds.

Try this plant-based frittata recipe courtesy of Cutter. It's not only fresh and tasty, but it's incredibly good for you.

Kale and zucchini frittata recipe

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS

1 leek, finely sliced
2 tbsp Extra Virgin olive oil
3 zucchinis (courgette), cut into rounds
1 bunch kale or cavolo nero, washed, trimmed and finely shredded
90g baby spinach
6 organic eggs
90g goat's feta
Sea salt to taste

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180°C fan forced.
2. Saute leek in olive oil until softened, then add the shredded kale and cook through for 5 minutes until wilted. Add the zucchini and spinach and cook for a further 5 minutes.
3. Break eggs into a bowl, season with a little salt, then lightly whisk and pour over the vegetables in the pan.
4. Crumble over the feta cheese and bake for 20-30 minutes until golden.
5. Serve warm or at room temperature.

OPTIONAL

Serve with fresh, leafy greens drizzled with lemon and olive oil.