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Less meat 'means a longer life'

Eating little or no meat can help people live longer, researchers have found.

Their lives are "significantly longer" than the general population, researchers have found.

It has been suggested that eating a balanced vegetarian diet could reduce the risk of developing certain cancers and heart disease, cut cholesterol levels and the chances of suffering from kidney and gall stones, diet-related diabetes and high blood pressure.

A team from the Centre of Cancer Research in Germany

monitored almost 2,000 people aged between 10 and 70, who ate either no meat, or less than average between 1978 and 1999.

Those studied were either vegans, who eat no meat, fish, eggs or dairy products, vegetarians, who eat eggs and dairy products, but no meat or fish, and occasional meat eaters.

Across the group, there was an average of 59 deaths for every 100 deaths in that age range in the general population during that period.

But completely avoiding meat was not the healthiest diet, the researchers found.

For every 100 deaths among vegans, there were 66 among vegetarians and 60 among occasional meat eaters.

Amongst smokers, the mortality rate was 70% higher than non-smokers, while those who took the most exercise reduced their mortality rates by more than 30%.

Moderate alcohol made no discernible difference to lifespan, the researchers concluded.

Dr Jenny Chang-Claude, of the Centre of Cancer Research, said: "Essentially, the key issue here is having a properly balanced diet."



Meat - not the key to a long life

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Dr Jenny Chang-Claude,
Centre of Cancer
Research