

**TOI Bombay Times  
MUMBAI**  
23<sup>rd</sup> February'18: Page No. 03

## Top sources of proteins for vegetarians



**LENTILS**

When it comes to protein, carbohydrates, fiber, lentils and split green peas are great. They are also considered to be a starchy protein.

**How to have it**  
Boil and cook these with your favourite spices. You could also eat them plain over salads. They make a great meal when combined with rice or quinoa and can also be used to make koftas, burger buns and can also be incorporated in spaghetti sauce.



**SABZA OR CHIA SEEDS**

Though Chia seeds have been hogging the limelight since the last couple of years as superfood, it has actually been around since ancient times. Sabza (chia seeds) can absorb a lot of water and look gel-like. They are rich in soluble fiber and can add to any meal by enhancing the fiber content, protein and healthy fats.

**How to have it**  
Soak sabza for around an hour in some almond milk for a nourishing vegan pudding. You can have these with your beverages, oats, cereals etc.



**QUINOA**

This is a gluten-free seed. Quinoa has eight grams of protein per cup, carbohydrates, and fibre as it's a starchy protein. This is amazingly versatile and can be had in multiple ways — soup, with fruits, as a hot breakfast cereal and more.

**How to have it**  
Have upma made of this superfood. You can also use it instead of rice for more diversity in your carbohydrate intake. Have it with sautéed greens. Quinoa could also be used as cereal.



**The myth usually doing the rounds is that vegetarians and vegan food is devoid of optimum protein. However, experts, dieticians and nutritionists have reiterated many a time that there are enough plant-based protein sources around and people don't actually need to have meat to get their daily quota of protein.**

**"A diet that is plant-based and balanced is good enough. One should include a lot of foods that are sourced from plants as these can provide nourishment and are healthy for the body. This kind of diet can actually give you all the amino acids that are required by your body," says clinical nutritionist Nupur Krishnan.**

**Another dietitian explains that one has to plan out their meals and then ensure that they include good sources of protein like kidney beans, lentils, chickpeas, and soya or dried peas. Experts suggest that pairing protein with sautéed vegetables of different colours and brown/black/red organic rice can be a great meal.**

**Dr Nilesh Gautam, interventional cardiologist says that a well-planned diet might lower risk of type-2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and some types of cancer. He adds, "Increase fiber intake in your diet. Soluble fibers absorb water and form a gel that helps slow down food as it passes through your digestive system. High protein intake increases the release of the fullness hormone PYY, which reduces appetite and promotes fullness. Protein also raises your metabolic rate and helps you retain muscle mass during weight loss."**

**Want to know all about the plant-based proteins? Lifestyle doctors say that one can surely benefit from a diet rich in plants, fiber, minerals, phytonutrients. We spoke to nutritionists and dieticians to find out which are the top sources of plant-based proteins...**

**— Debarati Saha@timesgroup.com**