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Pesco-vegetarian diet offers best health protection for elderly, study finds

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

Pesco-vegetarian diet, which includes fish, best protects against death for the elderly compared to other vegetarian diets

A **new study** (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S000291652400652X>) found that a pesco-vegetarian diet, which includes fish, offers the greatest protection against dying and related health issues for very elderly people.

Researchers at Loma Linda University Health discovered that vegetarian diets are linked to a lower risk of dying from various causes, especially for men and middle-aged people. However, very elderly vegetarians might face a slightly higher risk of neurological issues like stroke, dementia, and Parkinson's Disease. Despite this, a pesco-vegetarian diet still provides a small but noticeable benefit compared to other types of diets, even for older adults.

Gary Fraser, a professor at Loma Linda University, said that a vegetarian diet seems to protect people from dying early, especially in middle age. However, once people reach their 80s, this benefit may not be



A new study finds that a pesco-vegetarian diet, which includes fish, best protects against death for the elderly compared to other vegetarian diets. Photo by [Valeria Boltneva](https://www.pexels.com/photo/salmon-dish-with-vegetables-1516415/) (<https://www.pexels.com/photo/salmon-dish-with-vegetables-1516415/>).

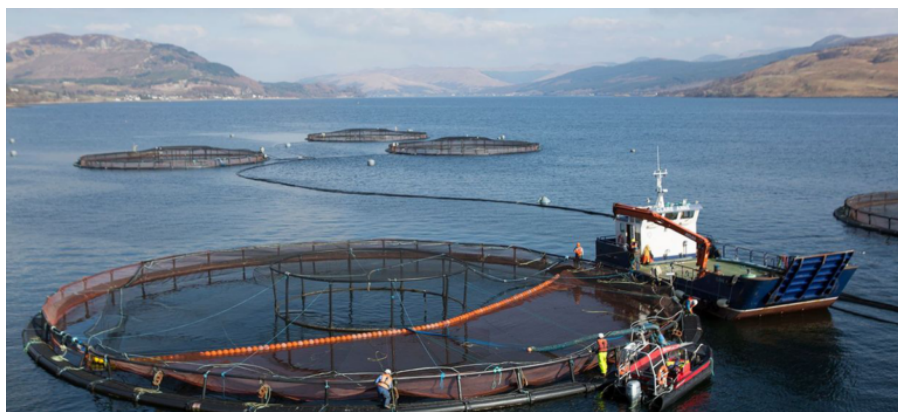
as strong for those who stick strictly to a vegetarian diet.

“These increased risks of neurological conditions among vegetarians in their 80s weren’t huge, but something is going on there that we shouldn’t ignore if we wish the vegetarian advantage to continue for all vegetarians in their later years,” Fraser said, who is the principal investigator of the study.

A banner for Best Seafood Practices certification. On the left, there is a photo of a person in a yellow protective suit and mask handling seafood. In the center, a photo shows a fishing ship on the ocean. To the right of the photos, the text reads: "A comprehensive solution for the wild seafood supply chain." Below this text are three checkmarks with labels: "Crew rights", "Food safety", and "Environmental responsibility". On the far right is the "Best Seafood Practices" logo, which consists of a stylized eye icon and the text "Best Seafood Practices". Below the logo is a button that says "LEARN MORE" with a right-pointing arrow.

(<https://bspcertification.org/>).

The study used data from the Adventist Health Study-2, which includes nearly 96,000 Seventh-day Adventists in the U.S. and Canada. Researchers analyzed information from over 88,000 people and about 12,500 deaths, sorting diets into five categories: non-vegetarian, semi-vegetarian, pesco-vegetarian, lacto-ovo-vegetarian, and vegan.



Have researchers figured out how to slow down the aging process in Atlantic salmon?

Spermidine, a compound found in vegetables, cereals and soybean products, may help salmon break down fatty acids and maintain optimal immune function.



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The research team found that Adventist vegetarians had a 12 percent lower risk of death compared to non-vegetarians. Pesco-vegetarians had an 18 percent lower risk, lacto-ovo-vegetarians had a 15 percent lower risk and vegans had less than a 3 percent lower risk overall. Male vegans had a much lower risk than male non-vegetarians, but the benefit was smaller for female vegans.

“Overall, this is some of the clearest data that American vegetarians are greater protected from premature death than non-vegetarians,” Fraser said.

Read the full study (<https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/1055467>).

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