



January 25, 2011 – Grand Rapids, MI

## C'mon, People! Militant Vegans

Vegetarianism seems to be increasing based on the questions I get asked. One form of vegetarianism is called veganism. Vegans consume no animal products whatsoever: no dairy, no eggs, no gelatin, nothing from an animal source. The reasons people give vary. Some people are animal lovers, although I don't know anyone with pet bison or steer or salmon. I get it—nothing should die so I live. I respect that as a way someone wants to eat, such as my very good friends Patrice and Damian.

Others are appalled at the conditions animals live in at some of the factory farms that grow meat, pork, eggs, and poultry for market. I get that, too—nothing should suffer so I can eat. That's why Paula and I buy free-range eggs and never eat veal: even though conditions in which the calves are raised have improved over the last 30 years, we're uncomfortable with the idea of killing a very young animal for market.

But where I draw the line is when vegans get militant; you have a right to eat the way you want, but not the right to browbeat the rest of us. Let's discuss it calmly, and sometimes agree to disagree. And I get *really* annoyed when they use dubious scientific claims to support veganism; for example, they claim that our digestive systems were not designed to eat animals or fish. I'm sorry, but there's no evidence of that.

I could give you examples of elements of our digestive process that are designed for meat-and-dairy eaters, but for now I have just one simple question: if it's a complete diet, why do you need a supplement? Veganism requires a person to supplement his or her diet with vitamin B12 because the primary source of B12 is meat. If vegans can't be healthy without a shot or a supplement, it can't be the perfect way to eat.

C'mon, People!

Think in terms of 200 or 2,000 years ago. There were no supplements, and plants don't grow year-round in a lot of the world; how would people survive if they didn't eat meat? We are alive because our ancestors survived. They primarily ate plant products—and we would do better if we ate more of them—but they ate meat and fish when they could catch it or trap it. If meat and fish were bad for them, why are we still here? Wouldn't the meat eaters have died out, leaving only the plant eaters to inherit the earth?

I respect anyone who lives their beliefs. Be a vegan if you choose to, but do it because it's your personal choice based on your beliefs or your preferences—because there's no science to support it. To listen to more on this topic, copy and paste this URL:

[http://www.drchet.com/mp3/2012mp3\\_Cmon\\_People/01-25-2012.mp3](http://www.drchet.com/mp3/2012mp3_Cmon_People/01-25-2012.mp3)



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**Dr. Chet**

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