

Bangaloreans jump on to the band - VEGAN!

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Members of Vegan Club at a potluck meet

More and more people are resorting to the healthy way of living and the new health revolution that's caught on big time is veganism!

Veganism is a type of vegetarian diet that excludes meat, eggs, dairy products and all other animal-derived ingredients. People from all walks of life are turning vegan effortlessly and enjoying the health benefits. It is a lifestyle of compassion, vegans in the city say. Bangalore has a burgeoning clan of committed vegans, who vouch for the lifestyle citing not just a clear conscience, but also a healthy body.

Dilip Bafna, the founder of the Vegan Bengaluru Club, says he wasn't aware of veganism when he adopted it 17 years ago. He was always involved with animal welfare activities and was a vegetarian. "Somewhere along, I felt 'welfare' wasn't enough. There's more to do. Animal rights are equally important. In 1993, I shunned milk products and all kinds' of animal products," he says.

The Vegan Bengaluru Club was started about two years ago and all the vegans in the city meet every weekend for a potluck meet. When asked about how it all started, Dilip says "I love challenges, so I started the Bangalore Vegan group, with one person who attended the first meeting on April 2008 now our strength has gone to seventy four people and it is growing amazingly. We meet every two weeks now, for a potluck lunch session. We take off to a different place every time but we generally meet at Lalbagh,"



Further explaining the concept of veganism, he says "Eating out, visiting friends and relatives, and social acceptability could come in the way of being a vegan, but once you decide your path, it is easy walk on it. If one looks out consciously, there are many vegan-friendly products even in our supermarkets,"

Does being a vegan mean giving up on your coffee and ice-cream? “Not at all. Alternatives such as soy milk, tofu and non-dairy creamers, are not only similar in taste, but also healthier,” points out Dilip.

Dilip explains that by adopting the right diet, one can prevent most lifestyle diseases like diabetes, cancer, and other auto-immune disorders. Dilip uses soy milk, and other substitutes like vegan cheese and tofu for dairy products.

“Being vegan requires you to be diligent. Anything we pick up from the shelves, we read the fine print. ‘Milksolids’ is the term to watch out for,” says Dilip. You have to be careful about cosmetics as well. Doesn’t it drastically reduce choice? Not really, he says. Parle has a whole range of vegan biscuits and other products. There are so many herbal cosmetics available. If you have the conviction to be truly compassionate, these are just tiny bits of tweaking you need to do, he says.

If one goes by the number of members in online vegan communities or the fact that there was a recent vegan festival in our city or that Café Coffee Day actually offers vegan options, this tribe is slowly but surely increasing.

If you want to be a part of the vegan group, you can get in touch with Dilip Bafna through - bengaluruvegans@gmail.com