

Can Someone Live Healthily on \$5 a Day on Food?

By
Tristan Barnett

Meat products is typically “expensive” whereas vegetarian foods are typically “cheap”. However, it is often debated as to whether you get can all your required nutrients in vegetarian foods that are typically found in meat products (such as protein, iron and omega-3 fatty acids). If these ingredients were found in vegetarian foods then can someone live healthily on say \$5 a day on food?

Table 1 gives a list of foods with protein, iron and omega 3, calcium and fat per serving; along with the associated cost.

| Item | Protein | Iron | Omega 3 | Calcium | Fat | Cost |
|--------------------------------------|---------|--------|---------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Coles Right Start Cereal | 4.2g | 3.0mg | | | | \$2.80 420g |
| Coles Strawberry 98% fat free yogurt | 6.3g | | | 272mg | 2.6g | \$3.50 1kg |
| Coles Australian Tasty Cheddar | 6.2g | | | 172mg | 8.8g | \$5.80 500g |
| Coles Mixed Vegetables | 1.4g | 0.8mg | | | | \$1.60 1kg |
| Coles Pasta | 15.0g | | | | 2.3g | 0.65c 500g |
| Coles Multigrain Toast | | | 1000 mg | | | \$2 loaf |
| Coles Lea Margarine Spread | | | 2000 mg | | 6.3g | \$3.30 500g |
| Bananas | 1.1 g | 0.3mg | | | | \$3/kg |
| Apples | 0.3 g | 0.1mg | | | | \$3/kg |
| 5 Star Lean Beef | 21.3g | 2.6 mg | | | 5g | \$16/kg |
| Tasmanian Atlantic Salmon | 26.6g | 0.3mg | 4023mg | | 27.2g | \$46/kg |

Table 1: Amount of protein, iron and omega 3, calcium and fat per serving; along with the associated cost for certain foods

Table 2 lists the author's daily diet for breakfast, lunch and dinner

| Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Coles Right Start Cereal | Coles multigrain toast | Coles Pasta |
| Coles Strawberry 98% fat free yogurt | Coles Lea Margarine Spread | Coles Mixed Vegetables |
| Banana | Coles Australian Tasty Cheddar | Coles Australian Tasty Cheddar |
| | | Apple |

Table 2: The author's daily diet for breakfast, lunch and dinner

Firstly, note from table 1 that there is more iron in a serving of Coles Right Start Cereal (3 mg) than a serving of 5 Star Lean Beef (2.6 mg). There is clearly more protein in beef and atlantic salmon, but there is a cumulative amount of protein in cereal, yogurt, cheese, vegetables, fruit and pasta. Atlantic Salmon has one of the highest sources of omega 3, but there is omega 3 in both multigrain toast and margarine. Note that Atlantic Salmon has a very high fat content (27.2g) including 5g of saturated fat. The necessary vitamins and minerals are contained in cereal, fruit, vegetables and multigrain bread. Calcium is contained in dairy products such as yogurt, cheese and milk (the author prefers yogurt on cereal rather than milk). Vegan is dangerous because you don't get calcium (and animal fats).

From a spiritual perspective, by killing animals you run the risk of being reincarnated into say a tiger in the afterlife since tigers are designed to eating meat. Note that there is no harm to animals in obtaining dairy products of cheese, yogurt and milk. Also, eating meat makes it difficult to progress spiritually by increasing your level of consciousness. And by increasing your level of consciousness you actually become less likely to develop depression; yet health experts are claiming that omega 3 helps to reduce depression and recommend eating fish such as Atlantic Salmon. And remember the sixth commandment "Thou shalt not kill". The cost of meat is expensive with 5 star lean beef at \$16/kg and Tasmanian Atlantic Salmon at \$46/kg and kosher meat is even more expensive. Clearly eating meat is just for the taste and is expensive. Further, humans are not designed for eating meat. We do not have claws, teeth for chewing meat or the digestive tract. And animals carry diseases leading to the possibility of food poisoning.

Based on the author's experience of shopping over a long time period, only about \$5/day is spent on food and is living very healthily. The following vegetarian foods contain a high source of omega 3 if this is an issue.

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/12-omega-3-rich-foods>

- Flaxseeds 2338 mg / serving
- Chia Seeds 4915mg / serving
- Walnuts 2542 mg / serving
- Soybeans 1241 mg / serving