

Should I try a meatless Monday?

Have you considered starting Meatless Mondays at your house?

In other words, no chicken, steak, fish, or lamb. Yes, no meat at all.

Having a meatless meal once or twice a week can be beneficial to your health as well as good for the environment.

Quinoa is a seed, not a grain, and is a complete protein so it can be easily substituted for meat. And it is very versatile. It's easy to find interesting recipes online and try something new. Quinoa patties can be delicious!

When eliminating meat from a meal or two, be careful of some of the highly promoted new meat substitutes such as Beyond Burger and Impossible Burger, as they are highly processed foods.

Many meat substitutes list wheat gluten as their first ingredient (not good if you are gluten-sensitive). Some use soy as their primary source of protein. Soy, unless it is organically produced, is a GMO food. And soy products can affect hormones.

It is much healthier to go with whole foods such as combining beans and brown rice to make a complete protein or using pasta made from high-protein quinoa and brown rice.

I am partial to the quinoa and brown rice pasta, available at Trader Joe's, as it has good texture, and is also gluten-free. It is delicious with marinara sauce or in a casserole with an assortment of seasonal vegetables.