

**ORIGINAL RESEARCH**

**An assessment of the impact of indigenous knowledge and plant-based diet on morbidity and mortality rates among Seventh Day Adventist church faithfuls.**

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**Abstract:**

Indigenous knowledge on a plant based diet has contributed to low morbidity and mortality rates among the Seventh Day Adventist church members. The dominant explanation for this trend is reliance on organic farming and a consistent indulgence in a vegetarian diet. Previous studies of the relation of vegetarian dietary patterns to health and disease risk has primarily relied on cross-sectional data thus has been unable to distinguish between ordinary vegetarians and the faith-based adventist vegetarians health status. Here we review initial published findings with regard to adventist vegetarian diets and several health outcomes. Vegetarian dietary patterns are associated with lower body mass index, lower prevalence and incidence of diabetes mellitus, lower prevalence of the metabolic syndrome and its component factors, lower prevalence of hypertension, lower all-cause mortality, and in some instances, lower risk of cancer. Reviewed too, are findings with regard to factors related to vegetarian diets and bone health. These initial results show important links between vegetarian dietary patterns and improved health. Adventist Health Studies have demonstrated that a vegetarian diet is associated with longer life and better health.

**Key words:** vegetarian dietary patterns, organic farming, health status