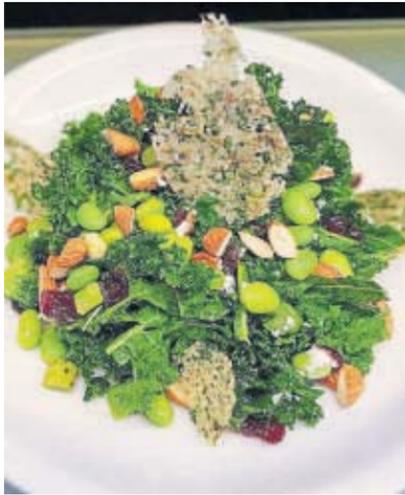


HEALTH WISDOM

# Thinking of turning vegan?



A vegan diet reduces the risk of metabolic disorders

Anjali Mukerjee

Vegan diet consists of plant-based foods, with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts and seeds. Since a vegan diet is full of healthy staples, they tend to be higher in vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals and fibre, along with an abundance of vitamins like B, C, and E, magnesium, potassium, iron and antioxidants while also being low in cholesterol and saturated fats.

A plant-based vegan diet reduces the risk of metabolic disorders such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, stroke, obesity, some cancers including prostate and colon cancer, because it is alkaline in nature and has an anti-inflammatory effect.

The following are some of the ways in which vegan diet tend to be beneficial: **Prostate, colon and breast cancer:** According to a study, men who switched to a vegan diet, had subdued progression of prostate cancer. Similarly, it was observed that countries where women consume very little animal products have a much lower rate of breast cancer development as opposed to others. Vegan diet can also greatly reduce your chances of colon cancer due to abundance of whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

**Cataracts and macular degeneration:** Vegan diet can prevent the formation of cataract and ward off the

onset of macular degeneration, due to its richness in fresh fruits and vegetables, carrots, pumpkin, etc., that are high in antioxidants. **Arthritis and osteoporosis:** Avoiding wheat, rye, barley (any gluten) among grains and consuming millets such as jowar, bajra and ragi, as well as brown rice along with pulses and vegetables has shown promising improvement in pain management in rheumatoid arthritis as well as in preventing osteoporosis.

In addition, going vegan makes you lose weight and increases your energy levels. According to many population-based studies, a vegan diet leads to a lower body mass index, which means healthy weight and lack of excess fat. Vitamins such as A and E from nuts and vegetables help improve skin. Studies also indicate that the health span of a vegan individual is increased by an average of three to six years. When switching to a vegan diet, many women report less intense premenstrual syndrome.

Being vegan also has a positive impact on the environment as a vegan lifestyle reduces the toll on the environment since growing plants takes fewer resources when compared to rearing animals meant for food. However, for a vegan, eating dal, rice, grains, nuts and seeds but not adequate fruits and vegetables, may result in not being able to completely reap the benefits of a vegan diet.

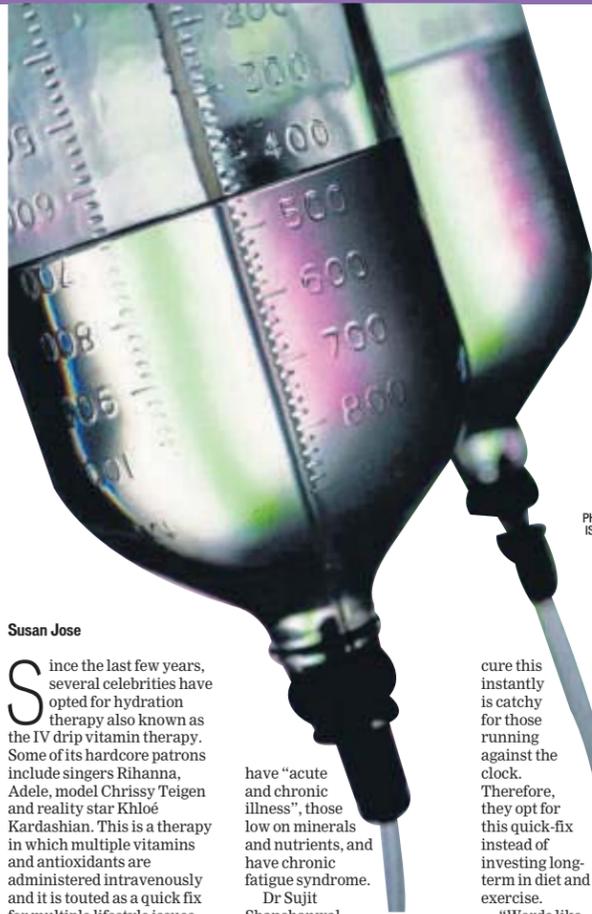


PHOTO: ISTOCK

Susan Jose

Since the last few years, several celebrities have opted for hydration therapy also known as the IV drip vitamin therapy. Some of its hardcore patrons include singers Rihanna, Adele, model Chrissy Teigen and reality star Khloé Kardashian. This is a therapy in which multiple vitamins and antioxidants are administered intravenously and it is touted as a quick fix for multiple lifestyle issues such as dull skin, exhaustion, hangover, jet lag, etc.

However, reportedly, Kendall Jenner ran into complications after an IV drip session — held just before the Oscar night — went awry. This has made everyone sit up and question not only the safety of these procedures but also their validity.

### HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The trend began after a “collateral effect” experienced by patients who were being treated for liver failure. Dr Rinky Kapoor, dermatologist and skin laser specialist, SL Raheja Fortis Hospital, Mahim, explains, “Those patients who were injected with high doses of the master antioxidants, in particular, glutathione and vitamin C, exhibited changes in the skin. Their hyperpigmentation cleared and there was a general improvement in the skin texture and appearance.”

Several injectable combinations of antioxidants and vitamins are now doing the rounds in the market, in any and every dose. All experts agree that none of them were approved by FDA to this date for aesthetic purposes.

### IDEAL CAUSE FOR AN IV DRIP

Drips are recommended if the benefits outweigh the risks in case of limited options in treating a skin problem, or in cases of genuine deficiency. When and if medically required, it is an efficient way to hydrate patients and administer essential nutrients.

According to Dr Saurabh Shah, dermatologist, Bhatia Hospital, Tardeo, mostly IV drip is given to patients who

have “acute and chronic illness”, those low on minerals and nutrients, and have chronic fatigue syndrome.

Dr Sujit Shanshanwal, dermatologist, Apollo Clinic, echoes the same thoughts. He says, “Vitamin drips should ideally be used when there is a need for it and it would be best assessed by testing the blood levels of the suspected deficiencies and then supplementing them as needed. Blindly pumping your body with things that are not needed is never a good idea.”

### THE FAD OF ‘GLUTA’ SHOTS

A popular trend these days is the glutathione drip aka gluta shots. Glutathione is supposed to be the mother of all antioxidants and gives the skin a glow. Therefore, almost all the celebrities opt for this drip.

“This is FDA approved for patients with liver diseases and hence a controversial topic (for beauty treatment

ents),” says Dr Shah, adding, “There are cases of thrombophlebitis at the site of injection especially in men and women who are smokers and alcoholic.”

### FAMOUS FAKE PROMISES

Most people in metro cities are fatigued and ill-nourished due to their erratic lifestyle and eating habits. The fact that an intravenous replacement can

cure this instantly is catchy for those running against the clock. Therefore, they opt for this quick-fix instead of investing long-term in diet and exercise.

“Words like detoxifying, skin glow, instant rejuvenation, immune boost, etc. are immensely attractive. Anything that promises these is taken up by the masses without giving it a second thought about the genuineness of the product, and the science backing the results. Sellers are making the most of this human instinct,” says Dr Kapoor. She further adds, “One must especially beware of medical spas and quacks offering intravenous therapies in ‘hangover clinics’, where



Kendall Jenner  
PHOTO: REUTERS

# THE DRIP OF BEAUTY

With Kendall Jenner facing complications due to the IV drip vitamin therapy, we check how safe this celebrity-endorsed, controversy-riddled health fad is

### Probable side effects of IV drips for aesthetic purposes:

- Bruising, infection and painful swelling at the IV site
- Excessive vitamin B can cause liver damage
- Glutathione can cause patchy skin
- With multiple drugs in the same IV, there can be drug interactions
- Rarely, may cause a life-threatening allergic condition called Stevens-Johnson syndrome.

Dr Kiran Naik, plastic and cosmetic surgeon, Global Hospitals, Parel



Chrissy Teigen  
PHOTO: INSTAGRAM/CHRISSTYTEIGEN

patients are promised immediate relief from the symptoms of a hangover (tiredness, headache, nausea) and hooked up to a drip of fluids and medication, with the idea of immediate recovery. A cocktail of vitamins like this can risk reaching toxic levels.”

### THE TAKEAWAY

The human body has a systematic way of functioning. When it receives a high amount of vitamins or minerals in a single dose, it filters out the majority of them via kidneys or liver. That is because they can't be stored in the body for use at a later time. So unless one has a medical deficiency, it logically does not justify the fact that these IV drips are beneficial.

“The benefits being observed by those propagating it or receiving it may be peer-driven or psychological. There are studies going on across the world on some of these molecules, and until a documented, placebo-controlled, proven study establishes the results and side effects scientifically, they are being taken at the patient's own risk,” says Dr



Rihanna  
PHOTO: FACEBOOK/RIHANNA; FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

Kapoor.  
■ susan.jose@thrive.com

With inputs from Dr Mohan Thomas, cosmetic surgeon, Cosmetic Surgery And Skin Institute, Mumbai and Pune,

Dr Saumya Shetty Hegde, cosmetologist, Roots Skin Clinic, Chembur and Dr Shuba Dharmana, dermatologist, Lejeune Medspa, Bangalore.

# ‘I’ve been a sportsperson since childhood’

## HEALTH-STRUCK WITH NEETU CHANDRA, ACTOR

Anjali Shetty

**Which is the one breakfast food that you must have?**  
Any seasonal fruit. A fruit is compulsory for my breakfast.

**One fattening food item that you just can't resist?**  
I cannot resist pastries.

**How do you get back in shape post a fattening indulgence?**  
I rarely eat anything which is fattening.

**Do you prefer mini meals? What do they normally contain?**  
Yes, I do prefer mini meals. Early in the morning, I have fenugreek (methi), sprouts and triphala water. Then after two hours, I have fruits with some dry fruits followed by dal, salads, makki di roti. Around 3pm, I have white tea. By 6pm, I have a smoothie, which consists of coconut water, spinach (palak) leaves, betel (paan) leaves and pineapple.

**Do you work out at home? What are the exercises you do?**  
I don't work out at home. I am a disciplined person and somehow my body is up on time to get ready for gym. It's the best thing to start your day



with a morning workout.

**Do you prefer outdoor or indoor physical activity?**  
I've been a sportsperson since childhood and so, I prefer outdoor physical activities. And from playing basketball to practising taekwondo, everything has been done outdoors.

**Your favourite physical activities?**  
Yoga, basketball, running and dancing.

**A health tip that you rely on.**  
A tip I rely on is having a lot of water, at least four to five litres a day.

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