



Damon Siye, a regular at Wild Rose Food Company, enjoys a Tempé Reuben sandwich, made out of soy beans and prepared on a grill.

## HEALTH

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health advantages, and vegetarian meals can open up a whole new world to different grains and whole new foods," Olmos said. "It's a learning process, a fun exploration period."

Vegetarians fall into three main categories:

- Vegans, or strict vegetarians, exclude from their diet all animal products: meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and all dairy products. Many vegans do not eat honey.
- Lacto-vegetarians exclude meat, poultry, fish and eggs, but eat dairy products.
- Lacto-ovo-vegetarians exclude meat, poultry and fish, but include eggs and dairy products.

Most vegetarians in the United States follow this latter type of diet, Olmos said. It is easier to prepare meals for lacto-ovo- and lacto-vegetarians, and many more foods are available in stores in this diet category.

Many myths surround vegetarianism, Olmos said, such as vegetarians not being able to get enough protein in their diets. While protein requirements vary greatly according to height, weight and age, Olmos said vegetarian diets meet and can exceed the Recommended Daily Allowance requirements.

"A properly-planned vegetarian diet is more healthful and nutritionally adequate than a meat-based diet," she said.

Some of the many health benefits to being a vegetarian include lower risks of osteoporosis, some types of cancers, and obesity.

For vegetarians, the keys to a healthful diet are a balance of foods and a variety of foods, Olmos said. A plant-based diet can meet the body's need for the essential amino acids, provided that various unrefined grains, legumes, nuts and vegetables are eaten regularly, she said.

Vegans have to take a little more time and creativity to plan healthful meals, which are void of all animal products, Olmos said. Because Vitamin B-12 is only found in animal products, vegans typically have a difficult time satisfying this need.

Vegans can get Vitamin B-12 in fortified soy and grain products and in fortified cereals. Vegans are encouraged to take a 25 mcg B-12 tablet once a week.

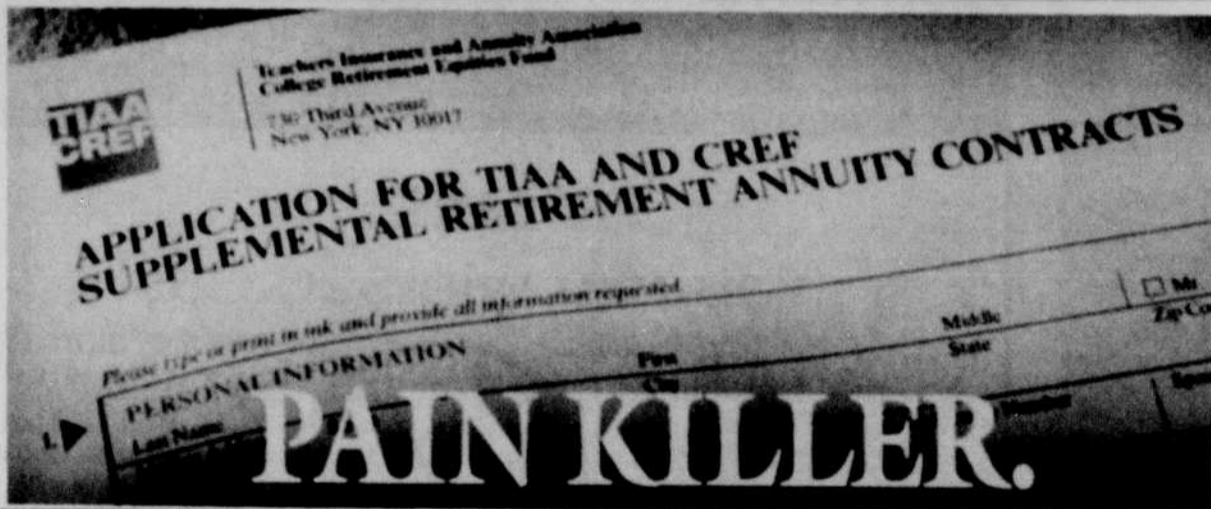
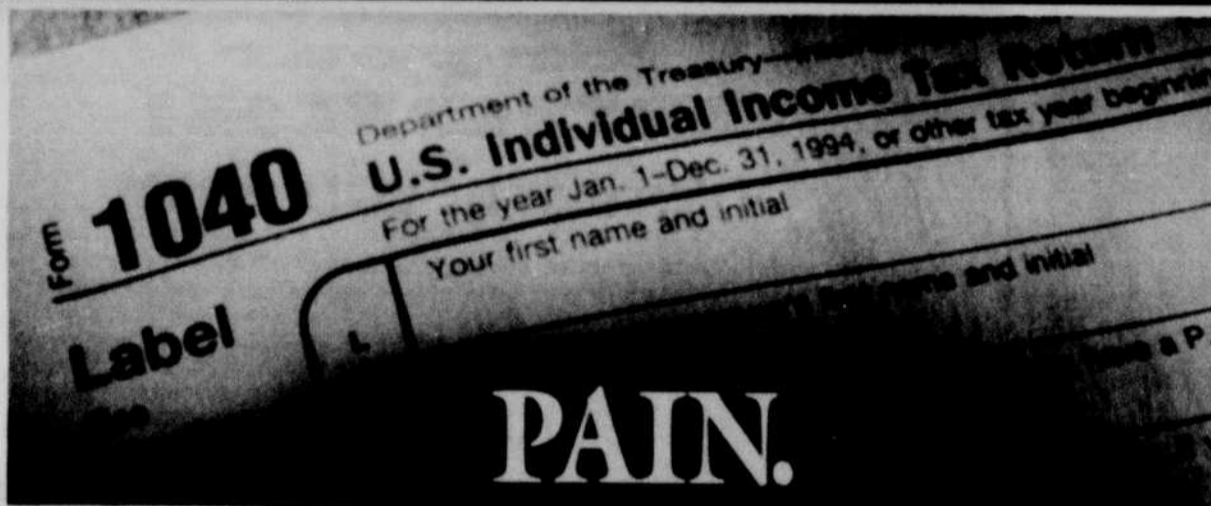
As for supplements, Olmos only recommends vitamins for those students who are not getting a balanced diet. However, anything more than 100 to 200 percent of the recommended daily allowance is not necessary as the body can't absorb more than this at a time, Olmos said.

"Vitamins won't make up for a bad diet, but they can help if you're missing something here and there," she said. "But, if you're getting a nutritionally adequate diet, you don't need vitamins."

Each term, the Peer Health Education Program offers workshops on various health issues, including a four-week class on vegetarian cooking, which is taught by student peer health educators. To sign up, call the peer health office at 346-4456.

People choose vegetarian lifestyles for many reasons including health, economic, religious, moral, environmental, compassion for animals, a belief in nonviolence, or for spiritual reasons.

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