

Dairy farming and Hinsa (Cruelty) - Should we as Jains consume milk products?

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1. Introduction to Speaker

- Name: Dr Jina Shah
- Profession: Family Doctor trained in Medicine working near San Francisco, USA. Also involved in medical research
- Other information: Dr Jina has been a vegan for more than 20 years
- Talk on:
 - Why Veganism is important in promoting Ahimsa
 - The Health Benefits of being Vegan and
 - The nutritional aspects of Veganism

2. Introduction to Topic

- What does the term "Vegan" mean? Vegan does not mean just vegetarian but also no consumption of dairy products. The practice of Jain veganism is an aspect of practicing Ahimsa
- Questions to Audience:
 - Q1: How many people think our most important ethical practice is ahimsa in Jainism? (Almost everybody)
 - Q2: How many people here practice vegetarianism? (Almost everybody)
 - Q3: Among the people who you know are vegetarians for long time - how many people have high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes or cancer? (Most people)
 - Q4: How many people know someone who is Vegan? (Lot of people)
 - Q5: How many vegans do you know – long term vegans (at least few years) who have heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or cancer? (No one)
- This exercise indicates that there may be benefits to becoming Vegan. More on that later.

3. Why is practicing Veganism an aspect of practicing of Ahimsa?

Jainism, Milk & Himsa

- In Jainism, Milk and its products are allowed – then how can consuming this be hinsak? OK in olden times as cows were very well looked after as family members. But today in UK, US and even in India consuming milk is an activity involved in hinsa. How?
- Natural life of cows is 20-30 years.
- When cows are used in commercial farms or organic farms their milk production is reduced after about 5 years so the cow is sent for slaughter by the meat industry. Milk consumers are subsidising meat consumers as the farmers making money on the milk so the meat can be sold cheaper. So by drinking milk we are becoming co-doers in this hinsa.

Every Cow kept constantly pregnant forcefully

- Cows only produce milk following giving birth. Cows are only allowed to rest for 2 months following giving birth before being made pregnant again. In UK & USA artificial insemination is used to make cows pregnant. This is also the case in India. The process of artificial insemination is akin to rape.

What happens to the calf at birth?

- Once the cow has given birth – the calf is taken away. Think about the strong bond between mother and child – we are responsible for breaking this by separating them.
- In commercial dairies calves are separated from their mother within 0-3 days. At separation time – mother is distressed so much that they try to attack the guy separating them – in the same way as humans suffer pain when mother and baby are separated the cow (a 5 sensed being with a mind) feels pain.

What happens to the calf afterwards?

- The female calf has the same life as the cow.
- The male calf is used for veal meat industry. Veal is tender - a delicacy for meat eaters
 - The calf is taken from mother and tied so it cannot move so no muscles are formed and meat is produced
 - kept in the dark for 6 months without any sunlight
 - The calf is fed an iron deficit diet so meat is soft
 - After 6 months of this torture, the calves are slaughtered for veal meat
- India is the largest exporter of Cow meat - this is directly linked to the large number of milk consumers

Milking process

- Milking is via machines
- Length of milking time set to 3.5 minutes
- Not every cow produces same amount of milk – some produce less, others more, but milking timings are same
- When cow does not produce enough milk and the machine is still pumping – you can see cows blood coming out into the milk
- Regulations allow up to certain parts per million (ppm) blood (called somatic cell count) in milk! This can be tested using spectrometers
- Due to the way cows are NOT looked after they often become ill and so pus is also allowed in milk in the same way. And in organic farms antibiotics are not allowed to be fed to the cows so organic milk also has pus in milk.

What is the food fed to cows made of?

- The cow food is made from: 20% waste products from the slaughter houses (i.e. meat) & 80% from vegetable grains. So due to human exploitation, cows are no longer vegetarians!

What happens at separation time of calf and mother?

- the cow is so shocked that for 2-3 days it does not produce any milk. Shock is similar to that if someone has died!
- the cow senses that they are no longer going to see the calf. The cow cries – the voice that comes out, even though so many years have passed by, Pravinbhai (the other speaker on this topic) can still hear that haunting voice!

Summary

- In contrast in the olden times when milk was used by our Grandfathers – this was relatively ahinsak – cows were kept as family members and allowed live their full lives. This is not the case today – consuming milk today we are co-doers of hinsa / violence.

Next points to come

- Is milk necessary or not ?
- and is there benefit in consuming milk or is there harm?

4. Health benefits of being a Jain Vegan

Cutting out dairy products has the following health benefits

- It makes a difference in **Heart disease**
- It lowers **blood pressure**
- It can prevent or reverse **Diabetes**

Studies have shown that people with these diseases who have cut dairy products out they can: lower their cholesterol without medicines
their blood pressure goes down
and they can reverse their diabetes

If you don't have the diseases then eating a (Jain) Vegan diet can prevent onset of these diseases.

Just being vegan is not enough to be healthy.

You need to eat sensibly to be a healthy vegan i.e. not too much fat, oil or sugar.

Indians and Disease Risks

Indians have a high risk of these diseases – a genetic susceptibility to deposit abdominal fat in our internal organs giving a higher risk of the metabolic syndrome which includes heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and can give premature strokes and heart attacks.

So it makes even more sense to become a Jain Vegan

Other Examples of Benefits

- An audience member has with diet changes including being a Jain vegan has cured themselves completely of debilitating psoriatic arthritis and almost of psoriasis too without the use of any medicines.
- A mother of 3 children in California has raised them vegan from birth and whilst the other children in their school have plenty of ear infections – her children have none. Ear infections are common in young children. The allergy that children develop to milk also causes infections, allergies and auto-immune diseases. These can also be reduced, reversed and cured by becoming a vegan.

Summary

- The benefits list is large.
- Of-course being vegan is not a cure for everything – we will all die one day, however the quality of our life will be much better by becoming a vegan.
- We will also be saving ourselves from the sin of being responsible for the hinsa of a 5-sensed being.

5. Nutrients required for a healthy Jain Vegan lifestyle & Questions

- The nutrient issues that need to be addressed are the same as if you were vegetarian but may be more or less in degree. Study in India also show the even vegetarian milk consumers have the same issues

Vitamin B12

- B12 is only found in Animal products (where bacteria produce the B12 in their bodies)
 - We need to get our Vitamin B12 levels checked and supplement as required
 - Vegan supplements of vitamin B12 are available
 - If we do not supplement with B12 we can have 2 potential problems:
 - Without enough B12, Homocystine levels in the body rise - this is a risk for heart disease
 - If B12 levels are very low we can have neurological problems in the brain and spinal cord both of which are completely preventable and partially reversible.
- To prevent these problems we need to get our Vitamin B12 levels checked and replaced as necessary
- B12 can be supplemented by one of 2 forms currently available:
 - Tablets - if you have no trouble absorbing it from the then use this form
 - Injections - if you have trouble absorbing it from the guts via tablets
 - Some vegan milks such as soya milk etc. have B12 added
 - Note that even older meat eaters also have B12 deficiencies – so this is not a problem due to becoming vegan.
 - Vegan supplements of Vitamin B12 made directly from bacteria are available.
 - Q: Is it not hinsa to kill bacteria for B12 – yes but this is better than killing a 5 sensed being for B12

Vitamin D

- If we live in a place where the sun is at a high enough angle in the sky above us and we spend at least 20-30 minutes in the sun with limbs exposed then enough Vitamin D may be produced naturally in our body.
- Unfortunately we do not spend enough time in the sun. We also cover up our bodies. So getting Vitamin D naturally is difficult.
- Milk does not naturally have vitamin D – it is actually added to the milk.
- Vegans can get their Vitamin D from Vegan milks such as soya that may have Vitamin D added or via supplements
- Vitamin D comes in 2 forms D2 & D3. D3 may be better absorbed
- Vitamin D2 is always Vegan
- Vitamin D3 can be obtained from animal sources such as lanolin (oil from sheeps wool) OR now Vegan sources such as a plant called lichen.
- If Vitamin D levels in our bodies are low we do not absorb Calcium well

Calcium

- Both vitamin D and Calcium are needed to keep bones healthy. This is a risk for bone thinning and fractures. This is especially a risk for women after menopause
- We've always been taught that we get calcium from milk or milk is the best source of calcium. However there is just as much bio-available calcium in other plant sources.
- Although milk has calcium in it, there is a theory that the milk protein in milk binds with the calcium and inhibits absorption
- There are Bio-available plant sources of calcium so you can do well on a plant based diet
- Soya, Rice or Almond etc. milks are often supplemented with calcium or you can take a calcium supplements.
- Dark Green leafy vegetables contain calcium [and some nuts and pulses/lentils also contains calcium]
- There is a study that shows vegetarians and vegans who get less than 500mg of calcium per day are at risk of fractures - so it is important to make sure that you are getting enough

The 3 main Vitamins/Minerals that are important for Vegans are Vitamin B12, Vitamin D and Calcium.

Iron

- This is not a unique issue to Vegans
- Some people have difficulty absorbing iron from milk
- Iron can be obtained from dark green leafy vegetables

Other Questions

- **Q1:** I'm not in favour of modern dairy farming but the quality standards in the UK are very strict – would they really allow blood in milk?
 - Both here and USA where large scale dairy farming a certain amount of contamination is part of the process.
 - If you go on google and search for somatic cell count – somatic cells are basically blood and pus – and you will find sources telling you which government allows how much in the milk.
- **Q2:** I understand that cows are injected with hormones to increase milk production and also fed antibiotics to keep infections down. When those chemicals are passed down to us via milk do they in any way produce any allergies?
 - Hormones and antibiotics given to cows have serious health effects for humans
 - The hormones passed to humans in milk could be responsible for prostate cancer in men and breast cancer in women
 - The antibiotics passed to humans when we drink milk are known to contribute to antibiotic resistance in humans
 - So much antibiotics are used in animals such that when it comes to use then on humans they do not work any more
 - One of the most common allergens is milk! The allergy is due to milk protein which has been implicated in:
 - type-I diabetes and
 - ear infections
 - immune reactions like arthritis in joints
 - skin eczema etc.
- **There are other questions and answers on the video regarding:**
 - Milk replacement alternatives: Soya milk, Rice Milk, Almond milk, Hemp milk, Oat Milk
 - Vitamin B12 and yeast
 - Goats milk – same hinsa problems as with cows milk
 - Panjrapore (Animal Sanctuary) - what happens when too many animals to look after?
 - Whole soya based products health benefits verses isolated soya proteins and health risks
 - Soya does not make men oestrogenised!
 - Cultural attitudes to milk need to be changed
 - Thyroid, iodine and soya
 - Pregnancy, babies and veganism
 - White sugar is refined in the USA using animal bones. Unrefined raw cane sugar is not processed in this way