



America's Largest Municipal Hospital System Now Offers Meatless Mondays

By Maya Gottfried
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Editor's Note: Eric Adams, Brooklyn Borough president at the time of this article's release, was sworn in as mayor of New York City on Jan. 1, 2022.

NYC Health + Hospitals has announced that it is participating in Meatless Mondays by expanding plant-based menu options on Mondays at all 11 of its acute care hospitals.

“We want to empower our patients to live their healthiest lives by introducing them to healthier foods that they may choose once they’re discharged,” said Mitchell Katz, MD, president and chief executive officer of NYC Health + Hospitals, in a statement announcing the program on Jan. 14.

While Mondays will feature a more extensive plant-based menu, plant-based options are also available to patients throughout the week, along with educational materials about the benefits of eating whole plant foods and additional support from Food and Nutrition Department staff.

Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams, a vocal proponent of a healthful plant-based lifestyle, had previously called on all hospitals to take the Meatless Mondays pledge. Adams recovered from type 2 diabetes by following a WFPB diet, [citing Forks Over Knives](#) as a source of support. He is now introducing New Yorkers to a plant-based lifestyle through programs including [Meatless Mondays in the Brooklyn Public School System](#) and the [Plant-Based Lifestyle Medicine Program at NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue](#).

“NYC Health + Hospitals, the largest municipal hospital and health care system in the country, is leading the charge to create a healthier and more sustainable future by adopting Meatless Mondays,” said Adams. “I commend Dr. Katz for his leadership on this issue. . . . Our shared goal is to create a healthier Big Apple, one where our government institutions support healthful dietary choices. Hospitals have a unique opportunity to influence patients and families in rethinking the nutritional quality of their meals, and Meatless Mondays now has a role in that conversation.”

On the first day of the new Meatless Mondays program—Jan. 7, 2019—1,500 patients at the 11 hospitals chose one of the new plant-based menu options.

“Our Food and Nutrition Department is proud to champion Meatless Mondays,” said Michelle McMacken, MD, director of the Plant-Based Lifestyle Medicine Program at NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue. “The science on plant-based nutrition is extremely compelling. Whether for cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, inflammation, autoimmune disease, brain health, gut health, chronic kidney disease, cancer prevention, or general health, a healthful, plant-based diet can have impressive benefits.”

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Ready to get started? Check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK's easy weekly meal-planning tool to keep you on a healthy plant-based path.