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## Article : Olympic Ice Dancer Misato Komatsubara Enjoys Being Vegan, Deliciously

Directions: Read the following article aloud.

Prodded to try vegan cuisine after a health scare, the Olympic bronze medalist (team event) thinks Japanese cuisines and veganism easily blend together.

There is a growing population of people who are choosing a vegan life-style, where they avoid eating animal-derived foods like meat, fish and eggs. Misato Komatsubara, 29, an Olympic ice dancer and bronze medalist in the figure skating team event in February's Beijing Games, is one of those people.

Komatsubara explains that although veganism is gradually spreading in Japan, there are still situations where it is not well understood. "Hopefully more people will come to [appreciate](#) the vegan lifestyle," she adds.

### Changes After Health Scare

Misato's vegan lifestyle started around five years ago in 2017, when a tumor was found near her uterus. At the time, her life as an ice dance competitor was based in Italy.

Her doctor warned her that the tumor could possibly rupture if she took an airplane back to Japan, [leaving no choice but to](#) undergo surgery in Italy. "I have to admit, I was terrified," she said.

The experience led her to re-evaluate her eating habits, which up to then had consisted of high intakes of pizza, pasta, salami and cheese, among others. She took on the challenge of trying veganism, which was becoming popular in Italy at the time.

### Featuring Soy Meat

Since she started figure skating at the age of nine, she had [struggled with](#) a strict weight management regime. However, since encountering veganism, she has been able to keep it stable.

Moreover, her skin condition and constipation also improved, and she felt less tired in competitions. "It works well with my body," she said.

People who are not familiar with vegan cuisine often ask her, "Does it taste bad?" or "Do you only eat vegetables?" Her main diet consists of rice, oatmeal, vegetables, and fruits, she says.

Misato also enjoys eating what she calls vegan gourmet. Using soy meat, which is attracting attention as the so-called fourth meat, following beef, pork, and chicken, she makes dishes at home like sukiyaki, and sweets such as pumpkin pie.

Her ice dance partner and husband, 30-year-old Tim Koleto, is not a vegan himself. However, he accepts his wife's dietary lifestyle. When he first tried soy meat, he says he felt some [resistance to](#) the texture but, he laughs, "It tastes good though. I can now munch away on vegan meals when they're served."

Although most of their activities are overseas, the couple enjoy visiting vegan restaurants together when they return home. More restaurants are now serving vegan meals in Japan, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is developing a certification system for food processors and restaurants that serve vegan foods.

Source: Olympic Ice Dancer Misato Komatsubara Enjoys Being Vegan, Deliciously

<https://japan-forward.com/olympic-ice-dancer-misato-komatsubara-enjoys-being-vegan-deliciously/>

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### Veganism in What You Wear

Among vegans, there is also a policy of avoiding animal materials not only in their diets, but also in what they wear.

Misato chooses to wear ice skates made from synthetic leather called vegan leather, instead of normal skates which are typically made from animal leather. Although they tend to be lighter than real leather-made skates, she says there are no durability issues. Last year, her vegan leather skates were developed by a Canadian company, and with them, Misato won her Olympic bronze medal.

### Blends Well with Japanese Cuisine

Misato is not the only Japanese athlete who is vegan. Former Paralympic swimmer Mei Ichinose is also a professed vegan. The number of athletes who follow a mainly vegetarian diet is said to be increasing.

Since ancient times, “Shojin ryori” (“Buddhist vegetarian cuisine”), which does not use animal food ingredients, has been deeply ingrained in Japan. Also, ingredients like tofu, miso, and soy-sauce have been supporting Japanese dining tables through the ages.

“I think Japanese cuisines and veganism may easily blend together,” states Misato.

She hopes that the understanding of the vegan diet will grow. Misato suggests, “I think trying out a delicious vegan restaurant once would be a good idea.”

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## 2 Key phrases and vocabulary

Directions: First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **appreciate** 正しく理解・認識・評価する、良さがわかる、ありがたく思う、感謝する
  - If you feel **appreciated** at work, you will be more motivated to work harder.
2. **leave (with) no choice but to ~** ~する以外選択の余地を残さない
  - The financial crisis **left no choice but to** cut the budget for the new project.
3. **struggle with ~** (困難なこと)と闘う、~に苦勞する、~に悩む
  - Many women **struggle with** nausea or vomiting in early pregnancy.
4. **resistance to ~** ~に対する抵抗、~への耐性
  - The most common basis of **resistance to** change in the workplace is fear of loss of position.

## 3 Questions

Directions: Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. Why did Misato Komatsubara change her eating habit?
2. What effects did she get from a vegan diet?
3. Is your diet mainly vegan or vegetarian? If yes, why? if no, would you change it to vegan or vegetarian?
4. Do you think veganism will become more popular in Japan?

## 4

## 日本語関連記事：「ビーガン」おいしく楽しんで アイスダンス北京五輪代表・小松原美里さん

肉や魚、卵などの動物性食品を取らない「ビーガン（完全菜食主義者）」というライフスタイルを選択する人が増えている。今年2月の北京冬季五輪に出場し、フィギュアスケート団体で銅メダルを獲得したアイスダンス選手、小松原美里さん（29）もその一人。国内でも広がりつつあるものの、まだ理解が得られない場面もあるといい、美里さんは「ビーガンというスタイルを多くの人に知ってほしい」と話す。（浅上あゆみ）

美里さんがビーガンになったきっかけは約5年前、子宮の近くに腫瘍ができたことだった。イタリアを拠点に競技生活を送っていた当時、医師から「飛行機で日本に戻ると破裂する可能性がある」と言われ、イタリアでの手術を余儀なくされた。「さすがに怖いな、と」。ピザやパスタ、サラミやチーズなどを多く摂取していた食生活を見直し、その頃、イタリアで広まり始めていたビーガンに挑戦した。

### 大豆ミートを活用

肌荒れや便秘が改善され、競技面でも疲れにくくなったことを実感。9歳からフィギュアスケートを始め、厳しい体重管理に苦労してきたが、ビーガンは「自分の体に合っている」と以降、続けている。

ビーガンになじみのない人から、「おいしくないのでは？」「野菜しか食べないの？」と聞かれることも多いという。食生活は米やオートミール、野菜、果物が中心だが、美里さんは「ビーガングルメ」を楽しむ。牛、豚、鶏に続く「第4の肉」として注目されている「大豆ミート」を活用したすき焼きや、パンプキンパイなどのスイーツも自宅で手作りする。

アイスダンスでカップルを組み、夫でもある小松原尊さん（30）はビーガンではないが、美里さんの食生活に理解を示す。大豆ミートを初めて食べたときは舌触りが違うと多少の抵抗感があったが、「味はおいしい。今は食卓に並ぶビーガン料理をパクパク食べる」と笑う。

海外での活動が多いが、帰国時にビーガンレストランを巡るのも2人の趣味。国内でも提供する飲食店が増えており、農林水産省はビーガン料理などを提供する飲食店や加工食品を対象にした認証制度の整備を進めている。

ビーガンには食事だけでなく、身につけるものでも動物性の素材を避けようとするポリシーもある。そのため、一般的に動物の皮で作られているスケート靴でも、美里さんは合成皮革の「ビーガンレザー」のものを選ぶ。革のスケート靴に比べて軽いのが、強度に問題はないという。昨年、カナダの会社で開発され、美里さんはその靴で銅メダルを獲得した。

### 日本食となじむ

ビーガンのアスリートは美里さんだけではない。元パラリンピック競泳の一ノ瀬メイさんもビーガンを公言している。菜食を中心とした食生活を送るアスリートは増えているという。

日本には古くから、動物性の食材を使わない「精進料理」が根付いている。また、豆腐やみそ、しょうゆなども、時代を経て日本の食卓を支えてきた。「日本食とビーガンはなじみやすいのではないかと美里さんは話す。

美里さんはビーガンという食生活への理解が広まってほしいと訴える。「一度、おいしいビーガン料理店に行ってみるのも良いと思います」と語った。

出典：「ビーガン」おいしく楽しんで アイスダンス北京五輪代表・小松原美里さん  
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