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## Post: Growing fava bean market and favism worries



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### Content

Vegan specific diseases series: part 2. Other: part [1](#).

As the world transitions towards veganism, vegan-specific diseases are more at risk to abound. One concern is fava beans, as even though they're a great protein alternative, there are those genetically susceptible to favism. We'll look closer as to whether or not it's a concern:

**Definition:** "An acute condition suffered after ingestion of certain species of beans, for example, *Vicia faba*, or inhalation of the pollen of its flower; characterized by fever, headache, abdominal pain, severe anemia, prostration, and coma; it occurs in some people with genetic erythrocytic deficiency of glucose 6-phosphate dehydrogenase. Chance exposure to the *Vicia faba*, by its impact on the phenotype of glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase, impinges on the expression or the gene, an example of incomplete penetrance."

Shorthand - fava beans cause anemia and other issues (mainly flu-like symptoms) in those with the G6PD gene.

Fava beans in meat alternatives is growing, especially due to a [surging demand](#).

#### Is favism a worry?

Favism impacts [400 million people](#).

[Much is in](#) Africa, along with the Mediterranean, Middle East, and Southern Asia (especially India).

Because fava beans are starting to turn up mainly in [meat alternatives](#) right now, rather than a protein alternative, these tend to be marketed in developed countries. These countries appear to have really low to no favism incidences.

The issue is mainly in the Middle East, because veganism is [rising there](#), in the form of plant-based meat (even though India is vegetarian more than most other countries, but excludes fava beans, due to a long-standing history with it enough to know to exclude it). These people, potentially unaware of their own favism, could fall in. These places should carry warnings or try not to eat fava beans when possible.

**Conclusion:** favism is an issue, but is not a concern where it's being marketed so far, but may be a concern in the Middle East in the future.

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