



The Mediterranean Diet

The latest headlines may have you thinking the key to health is sitting at a café sipping wine and eating cheese and olives. While the research supporting the health benefits of the Mediterranean diet are promising, there is more to it than wine and high fat foods.



What exactly is the Mediterranean Diet?

Named after the eating style typical of people living near the Mediterranean Sea, the Mediterranean Diet includes high intake of olive oil, fruit, nuts, vegetables, and cereals; a moderate intake of fish and poultry; a low intake of dairy products, red meat, processed meats, and sweets; and wine in moderation, consumed with meals. Research suggests that people who follow a Mediterranean-type lifestyle, including diet and physical activity, tend to live longer and have lower risk of chronic diseases.



Is it right for everyone?

Maybe. The Mediterranean diet has been associated with lower risk of some of the top problems we currently face including heart disease and diabetes. It isn't, however, in the absence of calorie balance, a weight loss diet. The Mediterranean diet can be a great foundation, but must be balanced with appropriate portions and calories overall, as well as other healthy behaviors, such as being physically active.



Getting Started

Want to give the Mediterranean Diet a try? Oldways offers the following suggestions for getting started. Eat lots of vegetables. Vegetables are vitally important to fresh tastes and delicious flavors. Change the way you think about meat. If you eat meat, have smaller portions. Always eat breakfast. Start your day with fiber-rich foods such as fruit and whole grains to keep you pleasantly full for hours. Eat seafood twice a week. Fish such as tuna, herring, salmon, and sardines are rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Cook a vegetarian meal one night a week. Build meals around beans, whole grains, and vegetables, and heighten the flavor with fragrant herbs and spices. Use good fats. Include sources of healthy fats in daily meals, especially extra-virgin olive oil, nuts, peanuts, sunflower seeds, olives, and avocados. Enjoy some dairy products in small portions. For dessert, eat fresh fruit and save sweets for a special treat or celebration.



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