



Patient Resources

The Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean diet is unlike “fad diets” that promise quick weight loss and are often unhealthy and unbalanced. The Mediterranean diet, or way of eating (WOE), consists of a balance of traditional foods consumed in places such as Greece and Italy in the 1960s. It gained much of its recognition and popularity after researchers discovered the connection between the health status of people consuming a Mediterranean-based diet compared to the health status of people consuming a standard Western, or American diet. Studies show that individuals following a Mediterranean WOE have a much lower risk of heart attack, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and premature death. Additionally, many of these individuals achieve weight loss in a safe, healthful manner.

We have provided you with a general guideline of the diet that studies have shown to be an effective WOE as well as tips that will help you begin successfully. Keep in mind that there is no “right” way to follow the Mediterranean WOE; there are many countries around the Mediterranean Sea and not all eat the exact same foods. The most important considerations of the WOE are choosing more natural, unprocessed foods and enjoying the physical and emotional benefits that will soon follow.

Grocery Shopping Tips:

Tip #1: Shop the perimeter of your grocery store, that is where natural, whole foods are found!

Tip #2: Read the ingredient label- choose foods without any added sugar.

Tip #3: Avoid foods labelled “low-fat” or “diet,” they are often more processed and unhealthy than the original or high-fat version.

Tip #4: Save money by purchasing a mix of both fresh and frozen foods (e.g., fruits, vegetables and seafood).

Eating Out

The Mediterranean lifestyle involves regular physical activity, enjoying life, and sharing meals with other people. This WOE encourages socializing with others, including eating out at restaurants in moderation. If you plan to eat out, use this simple guide to stay on track with the Mediterranean WOE:

1. Choose fish or seafood as your main dish.
2. Request that any fried or sautéed food is done in extra virgin olive oil.
3. Only eat whole grain bread, with olive oil instead of butter.

Recipe Resources

Whether you’re a beginner, or need a little recipe inspiration, Google “Mediterranean recipes” for plenty of tasty dishes!

The chart below provides examples of food groups and specific foods that follow the Mediterranean WOE.

Eat Daily	Beverages	Water, coffee & tea without added sugar. *1 glass/day of red wine is acceptable.
	Vegetables	Tomatoes, broccoli, kale, spinach, onions, cauliflower, carrots, Brussels sprouts, cucumbers, etc.
	Fruits	Apples, bananas, oranges, pears, strawberries, grapes, dates, figs, melons, peaches, etc.
	Herbs & Spices	Garlic, basil, mint, rosemary, sage, nutmeg, cinnamon, pepper, etc.
	Healthy Fats	Extra virgin olive oil, olives, avocado and avocado oil
	Nuts & Seeds	Almonds, walnuts, Macadamia nuts, hazelnuts, cashews, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds and more.
	Legumes	Beans, peas, lentils, pulses, peanuts, chickpeas, etc.
	Tubers	Potatoes, sweet potatoes, turnips, yams, etc.
	Whole Grains	Whole oats, brown rice, rye, barley, corn, buckwheat, whole wheat, whole grain bread and pasta.
Eat Frequently (at least 2 times per week)	Fish & Seafood	Salmon, sardines, trout, tuna, mackerel, shrimp, oysters, clams, crab, mussels, etc.
Eat Moderately (daily to weekly)	Eggs	Chicken, quail and duck eggs.
	Dairy	Cheese, yogurt, Greek yogurt, etc.
	Poultry	Chicken, duck, turkey and more.
Eat Less Often	Meats	Red meats, processed sausages, hot dogs, etc.
	Sweets & Refined Sugars	Soda, candies, ice cream, table sugar, etc.
	Refined Oils & Trans Fats	Soybean oil, canola oil, cottonseed oil, margarine, and other processed products
	Refined Grains & Processed Foods	White bread, pasta made with refined wheat; "low-fat" & "diet" foods.

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