



## Potential Health Benefits of Mediterranean Diet

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### DESCRIPTION

The Mediterranean diet has been linked to a number of health benefits, including a reduced risk of death and lower rates of cardiovascular disease. Definitions of the Mediterranean diet vary in a number of contexts, and scores are increasingly used to determine adherence to the Mediterranean diet in epidemiological studies. Some components of the Mediterranean diet overlap with other healthy diets, while other aspects are unique to the Mediterranean diet. In this forum post, we asked clinicians and researchers interested in the effects of diet on health to describe what constitute the Mediterranean diet in different populations. Different geographical contexts and how we might study the health benefits of this diet.

The Mediterranean diet (MD) is a diet derived from the coastal cuisine of Mediterranean countries such as Greece, Spain, Italy, France, and North Africa. This diet is widely accepted by professionals and healthcare professionals, as decades of studies have shown that DM adherence can reduce the risk of chronic non-communicable diseases such as: cardiovascular disease (CVD), cancer and cognitive health. However, conforming to the MD model can be difficult in the modern context, especially with the homogenized Western diet that is prevalent around the world.

Med Diet include guidelines for high consumption of extra virgin olive oil (cold pressed), vegetables including leafy greens, fruits, whole grains, nuts and legumes/beans, moderate consumption of fish and other meats, dairy products and red wine, and low intake eggs and sweets. Each description provides an indication of how often these foods should be eaten, e.g. regularly, daily, biweekly, and amount in the diet, described in subjective terms such as many, moderate, few, partial and various are used. Most lack specific suggestions for serving amounts or servings and do not specify the amount of food additives, such as sauces, spices, tea, coffee, salt, sugar or honey. Some definitions specify that cereals must be primarily whole grains.

Add descriptions of traditional practices; Olive oil has been added to vegetables and legumes to make them palatable, fruits are eaten as desserts or snacks, cheeses accompany salads and stews, and red meat is eaten only in special occasion.

The Mediterranean diet is a way of eating based on the traditional dishes of Greece, Italy and other countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. Plant-based foods, such as whole grains, vegetables, legumes, fruits, nuts, seeds, herbs, and spices, are the staples of the diet. Olive oil is the main source of added fat. Fish, seafood, dairy products and poultry are eaten in moderation. Red meat and sweets are only eaten occasionally

- The Mediterranean diet has been extensively studied for its ability to promote heart health. In fact, research shows that the Mediterranean diet may even be associated with a reduced risk of heart disease and stroke. One study compared the effects of a Mediterranean diet and a low-fat diet and reported that the Mediterranean diet was more effective at slowing progression. Plaque build-up in the arteries, which is a major risk factor for heart disease.
- The Mediterranean diet encourages a variety of nutrient-dense foods, including fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, whole grains, and heart-healthy fats. Therefore, following this diet may help stabilize blood sugar and protect against type 2 diabetes. Interestingly, some studies have shown that the Mediterranean diet can do reduced fasting blood sugar and improved haemoglobin A1C levels, a marker used to measure long-term blood sugar controls.
- Some studies suggest that the Mediterranean diet may benefit brain health and may even protect against cognitive decline as you age. For example, one study in 512 people found that greater adherence to the Mediterranean diet was associated with improved memory and a reduction in several risk factors for Alzheimer's disease. Other research has shown that the Mediterranean diet can reduce the risk of dementia, cognitive decline, and Alzheimer's disease.

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