

Health Tip

Eating Mediterranean

The Mediterranean Diet is modeled after the eating styles of adults living in certain regions bordering the Mediterranean Sea, where rates of chronic disease are among the lowest in the world.¹

The traditional Mediterranean diet is characterized by a high intake of olive oil, fruit, nuts, vegetables, and whole grains; 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.

More than a diet and more of a lifestyle, the Mediterranean Diet focuses on lifestyle factors such as:



Plenty of exercise



Mostly plant-based meals



Limiting red meat consumption, instead focusing on increasing fish intake



Moderate healthy fats, particularly olive oil and nuts/seeds



Use of herbs and spices instead of salt to flavor food



Drinking wine in moderation



Practical tips to make your diet more “Mediterranean.”

- Increase your day to day activity such as taking the stairs, standing/walking during phone calls, and planning physical outings.
- Substitute beans for meat, snack on nuts instead of chips, and try having Greek yogurt with nuts or fruit for dessert.
- Swap butter and refined seed oils for olive oil in cooking, use hummus, tahini, nut butter or mashed avocado on a sandwich/wrap, instead of mayonnaise or cheese.
- Make meat your side and vegetables your main course such as adding meat into a stir fry; use canned and water-packed tuna or salmon for a quick and easy way to increase fish intake.
- Enjoy a 5 oz. glass of red wine with dinner, if you don't drink, there is no need to start, having a glass of concord grape juice provides you with the similar health benefits.

¹ Mayo Clinic; *Mediterranean diet: A heart-healthy eating plan*; <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/mediterranean-diet/art-20047801>; accessed 3/6/2019.