



Many studies have shown that the Mediterranean Diet can support effective weight loss and help prevent heart attacks, strokes, type 2 diabetes and premature death.

It's based on traditional foods enjoyed by people in countries along the Mediterranean coastline, like Italy and Greece. Research has shown that these people are healthier compared to Americans and present a low risk of many lifestyle diseases.

This guide will offer the foundations of the Mediterranean Diet, which can be customized according to your needs tastes and preferences. The benefits of the diet include feeling satisfied and full while enjoying wonderful flavors.

HOW IT WORKS

- **Eat:** Vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, legumes, potatoes, whole grains, breads, herbs, spices, fish, seafood and extra virgin olive oil.
- **Eat in moderation:** Poultry, eggs, cheese and yogurt.
- **Eat only rarely:** Red meat.
- **Don't eat:** Sugar-sweetened beverages, added sugars, processed meat, refined grains, refined oils and other highly processed foods.

EAT THESE FOODS

While there is no strict set of rules for following the Mediterranean Diet, there are two main aspects that form its foundation: 1) healthy plant-based foods, and 2) relatively low in animal products. Fish and seafood play an especially central role.

You should base your diet on these healthy, unprocessed Mediterranean foods:

- **Vegetables:** Tomatoes, broccoli, kale, spinach, onions, cauliflower, carrots, Brussels sprouts, cucumbers, etc.
- **Fruits:** Apples, bananas, oranges, pears, strawberries, grapes, dates, figs, melons, peaches, etc.
- **Nuts and seeds:** Almonds, walnuts, macadamia nuts, hazelnuts, cashews, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, etc.
- **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.
- **Fish and seafood:** Salmon, sardines, trout, tuna, mackerel, shrimp, oysters, clams, crab, mussels, etc.
- **Poultry:** Chicken, duck, turkey, etc.
- **Eggs:** Chicken, quail and duck eggs.
- **Dairy:** Cheese, yogurt, Greek yogurt, etc.
- **Herbs and spices:** Garlic, basil, mint, rosemary, sage, nutmeg, cinnamon, pepper, etc.
- **Healthy Fats:** Extra virgin olive oil, olives, avocados and avocado oil.

Whole, single-ingredient foods are the key to good health.

AVOID THESE UNHEALTHY FOODS

You should avoid these unhealthy foods and ingredients:

- **Added sugar:** Soda, candies, ice cream, table sugar and many others.
- **Refined grains:** White bread, pasta made with refined wheat, etc.
- **Trans fats:** Found in margarine and various processed foods.
- **Refined oils:** Soybean oil, canola oil, cottonseed oil and others.
- **Processed meat:** Processed sausages, hot dogs, etc.
- **Highly processed foods:** Anything labeled “low-fat” or “diet” or which looks like it was made in a factory.

You must read food labels carefully if you want to avoid these unhealthy ingredients.

HEALTHY MEDITERRANEAN SNACKS

If you find yourself hungry between your 3 daily meals, these are good snack choices

- 1/2 cup high-protein Greek yogurt.
- A handful of almonds or walnuts.
- Fruits like berries or figs.
- Carrots or baby carrots.
- Apple slices with almond butter.

BEVERAGES

As with any diet, water is the number one recommended beverage to help keep you hydrated. Coffee and tea are also allowed, but remember to make them unsweetened to avoid unnecessary sugar.

You might be happy to know that modest amounts of red are also acceptable. But this is of course at your discretion. If you suffer from alcoholism or have problems controlling alcohol consumption, it is best to exclude wine from the diet.

DINING OUT

It's very simple to make most restaurant meals Mediterranean diet-friendly.

1. Choose fish or seafood as your main dish.
2. Opt for extra virgin olive oil.
3. Only eat whole-grain bread (no white bread) with olive oil instead of butter.

HOW TO SHOP AT THE MARKET

The general best practices for grocery food shopping include sticking to the perimeter of the store and choosing foods that are least-processed.

- **Vegetables:** Carrots, onions, broccoli, spinach, kale, garlic, etc.
- **Fruits:** Apples, bananas, oranges, grapes, etc.
- **Berries:** Strawberries, blueberries, etc.
- **Frozen veggies:** Choose mixes with healthy vegetables.
- **Grains:** Whole-grain bread, whole-grain pasta, etc.
- **Legumes:** Lentils, pulses, beans, etc.
- **Nuts:** Almonds, walnuts, cashews, etc.
- **Seeds:** Sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, etc.
- **Condiments:** Sea salt, pepper, turmeric, cinnamon, etc.
- **Fish:** Salmon, sardines, mackerel, trout.
- Shrimp and shellfish.
- Potatoes and sweet potatoes.
- Cheese.
- Greek yogurt.
- Chicken.
- Pastured or omega-3 enriched eggs.
- Olives.
- Extra virgin olive oil.

MEDITERRANEAN LIFESTYLE

If you know about the Mediterranean lifestyle, you know it is about life's enjoyment. Create an environment defined by good health and good people, and you will find yourself in good health. Clear your home of sugary, fatty food choices. Add physical activity to your daily schedule. And share your meals and life with the people who mean the most to you. That is what it's all about!