



Living a
**HEART
HEALTHY
LIFESTYLE**

the mediterranean way!



Simple lifestyle changes that can:

- ✓ Improve your heart health
- ✓ Lower your stress
- ✓ Lead to a longer, healthier life



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Heart Healthy Eating

When it comes to living a heart healthy lifestyle, the foods you eat play a large part in reducing your risk for heart disease. If you're concerned about lowering your risk for heart disease, or just want to eat healthier, it's never too late to make lifelong changes to your eating habits.

For heart health, it's hard to find a better eating plan than the Mediterranean diet. According to a 2007 study, incorporating the foods and eating habits of the Mediterranean diet can reduce your risk for heart disease.¹

A Healthy Mediterranean Diet Includes:

- An abundance of antioxidant rich fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains, beans, nuts (1 handful per day), and seeds.
- Use of healthy, monounsaturated fats such as Olive and Canola Oils
- Moderate amounts of lean protein, fish, and eggs
- A very small amount of red meat

Whole Grains, Fruits, and Vegetables In the Mediterranean region, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables make up a significant portion of daily servings. Heart healthy choices include whole wheat bread, pasta, and brown rice with very few or no unhealthy trans fats. Antioxidant rich fruits (berries, red grapes, acai) and vegetables (kale, spinach, brussel sprouts, broccoli) are eaten in abundance.

Protein Limit your intake of red meat, eat fish at least once a week (avoid fish that's fried or served with heavy sauces or butter), and eat lean skinless chicken and turkey.

Healthy Fats The Mediterranean diet doesn't focus on limiting total fat consumption—it focuses on making smart choices about the types of fat you eat. When choosing olive oil, Extra-virgin and Virgin olive oils are the least processed forms and contain the highest levels of antioxidant rich plant compounds. Make the switch from bad fats to good fats (see chart below).

✓ Good Fats

Monounsaturated fats:

Olive oil, canola oil, peanuts (natural peanut butter), avocados, seeds (sunflower and sesame).

Polyunsaturated fats:

Soybean oil, corn oil, safflower oil. Includes essential fats like Omega-3 and Omega-6 which comes from fish like salmon, mackerel, herring, and trout. This essential fat can also be found in walnuts, sunflower seeds, and supplements.

✗ Bad Fats

Saturated fats:

Palm oil, palm kernel oil, coconut oil. Also fatty beef, lamb, pork, poultry with skin, lard & cream, butter, cheese, and dairy made from non-reduced fat milk. Many baked goods and fried foods.

Trans fats (partially hydrogenated):

Industrially manufactured and used in the food industry. Fried foods (donuts & french fries), baked goods (pie crusts, biscuits, cookies), stick margarine, and shortening.

Easy Mediterranean Meal Guide

Eating “heart healthy” doesn’t mean you have to limit your choices. Follow the meal guide below to get a sense of what types of food to eat, and how much is in a serving size. Once you’ve incorporated this eating plan into your everyday lifestyle, you can change it up to suit your taste.

Breakfast	Snack	Lunch	Snack	Dinner
Grain 2 servings	Nuts & Seeds 1 serving	Grain 2 servings	Nuts & Seeds 1 serving	Grain 2 servings
Fruit..... 1 serving	Fruit or Vegetable 1-2 servings	Vegetable ... 2 servings	Fruit or Vegetable 1-2 servings	Vegetable 2 servings
Protein..... 1 serving		Protein..... 1 serving		Protein..... 1 serving
Dairy..... 1 serving		Dairy..... 1 serving		Dairy..... 1 serving

Oils (5-7 teaspoons per day)

Stay away from saturated and trans fats! Replace them with healthy, monounsaturated fats.

- olive & canola oils

Fruits (2-4 servings per day)

Limit your intake of fruit juice. Whole, antioxidant rich fruits are a healthier choice, they have more nutrients and less sugar.

- berries : 1/2 cup
- apple : 1 small (2.5 in.)
- banana : 1 small (less than 6 in.)
- melons : 1/2 cup
- grapes : 16 seedless
- orange : 1 small (2.5 in.)
- dried fruits : 1/4 cup
- canned, no sugar added : 1/2 cup
- sliced : 1/2 cup
- whole fruit : 1 tennis ball size
- 100% fruit juice : 4 oz.

Nuts & Seeds

Enjoy walnuts, almonds, peanuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, natural nut butters, etc. Stay away from honey roasted/salted varieties.

- nuts & seeds : 1/4 cup
- nut butters : 2 tablespoons

Grains, Beans and Legumes, Pasta, Rice, and Potatoes (5-9 servings per day)

Choose whole grains (whole wheat bread, pasta, and crackers; brown rice, and sweet potatoes).

- wheat bread : 1 slice
- english muffin : 1 half
- bagel : 1/2 frozen-1/4 deli
- waffles : one
- pancakes : 2 small
- tortillas : 1 small (6 in.)
- pasta, rice : 1/2 cup cooked
- baked beans : 1/2 cup cooked
- legumes or corn : 1/2 cup cooked
- cold cereal : 1 oz. (see package)
- hot cereal : 1/2 cup cooked
- 3 oz. potato : one
- popcorn : 3 cups popped
- pretzels : 1 oz. (approx. 10)

Vegetables (4-8 servings per day)

Choose antioxidant rich, green leafy vegetables such as kale, spinach, brussel sprouts, broccoli, spring mix, asparagus, etc.

- cooked : 1/2 cup
- raw : 1 cup
- tofu : 1/2 cup
- vegetable juice : 6 oz.

Protein

Each week you should have 1-3 servings of fish, several servings of poultry, and 1-2 servings of red meat.

Watch your serving size! The portions may be smaller than you’re used to.

- eggs : 1 per day (no limit on egg whites or egg substitute)
- fish : 5 oz. cooked (salmon, tuna, trout, cod, mackerel, herring)
- shellfish : 3 oz.
- shrimp : 8-10 large
- scallops : 15 small
- poultry : 3 oz. cooked (skinless white meat chicken or turkey)
- red meat : 3 oz. cooked (lean beef, eye of round, London broil, flank steak, and pork loin)

Dairy (3 servings per day)

Choose 2% cheese, 1% or skim milk, low-fat cottage cheese and low-fat yogurt.

- milk or soymilk : 8 oz.
- cheese : 1 oz.
- parmesan cheese : 2 tablespoons
- cream cheese : 2 tablespoons
- yogurt : 6-8 oz.
- frozen yogurt/ice cream : 4 oz.

Consult your doctor before beginning any diet or exercise plan.

Exercise for a HEALTHY HEART

A **Heart Healthy Lifestyle** is more than the food you eat. It's a way of life that incorporates wholesome foods, family and friends, and an active lifestyle. With a few simple changes, you can experience many of the benefits that can lead to a longer, healthier life.

Regular Activity is one of the most important things you can do to improve your heart health and lower your stress level. Not only does it make your heart stonger, it increases your energy, and helps you lose weight. Almost anyone can do some type of physical activity, even if they have a health condition like heart disease or diabetes. For most adults, brisk walking, riding a bike or swimming are safe, especially if you build up slowly. Check with your doctor before you begin any exercise program.



BEGINNER

light-to-moderate intensity

- Walk, bike or swim 10 minutes a day, 5 days a week
- Increase to 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week
- Add 20 minutes of resistance training, 3 days a week
- When you feel ready, move to the advanced program

ADVANCED

moderate-to-vigorous intensity

- Walk, bike or swim 3-5 days a week
- Begin with light-to-moderate intensity for 10 minutes
- Add 5-15 minutes of vigorous intensity exercise
- Finish with a 5 minute cool-down
- Resistance training 20 minutes, 3 days a week

Incorporate these simple tips into your exercise program:

- ✓ **Stay hydrated!**
Drink plenty of water before, during, and after any physical activity.
- ✓ **Don't get bored!**
Find a way to incorporate the activities you love to do. Replace one day with gardening, take a dance class or learn tai chi.
- ✓ **Plan for success!**
Exercise with a family member, friend, or group. A great way to succeed is to be around people who support and care for each other.

1. Mitrou et al. Mediterranean Dietary Pattern and Prediction of All-cause Mortality in a US Population. *Arch Intern Med.* 2007;167(22):2461-2468.

Information for this dietary guide came from:

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