

The Modified Mediterranean Diet



"The part can never be well unless the whole is well."

-Plato

Making good food choices begins with knowing what to eat. We have selected the Modified Mediterranean Diet, the best "all-around" diet for reducing your risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes. According to a study published by the New England Journal of Medicine in April 2013, researchers in Spain concluded that "among persons at high cardiovascular risk, a Mediterranean diet supplemented with extra virgin olive oil or nuts reduced the incidence of major cardiovascular events."

The Mediterranean Diet is comprised of vitamins, minerals and nutrients through plant based foods and a few animal sources which keep your intake of saturated fats and sugar low.

The diet includes food from five main categories: lean proteins, vegetables, fruits, carbohydrates and healthy fats.

For an expanded list of options and portion size, refer to the Modified Mediterranean Food Guide on page 30.

This diet has all the building blocks needed to keep your mood balanced and your stress reaction calmed by providing healthy fats, amino acids and antioxidants. These are essential to reduce inflammation, increase neurotransmitter production and reduce damage from toxins.

Helpful Tips for a Successful Diet

- Utilize Olive Oil in place of Canola oil, vegetable oil, butter or margarine.
- Replace refined grains with whole grains.
- Limit saturated fats.
- Eliminate all trans fats.
- If you fill your plate, then fill it with vegetables.
- Replace sugary food products with fresh fruit for a snack or dessert.
- Limit your red meat intake by eating fish and poultry instead.
- Small portions of plain yogurt and cheese can be included in your diet, as well.



- **Lean protein** is comprised of fish, chicken, turkey, lean cuts of grassfed beef, soy products, eggs and low-fat dairy.
 - **Daily Servings: 2 – 3**



- **Vegetables** including all salad greens, kale, chard, broccoli, peppers, cucumbers, asparagus, radishes, tomatoes and all non-starchy vegetables. Your serving sizes are endless in this category, so indulge.
 - **Daily Servings: minimum of 4**



- **Fruits** include all seasonal fresh fruits.
 - **Please look at the Clean 15 and Dirty Dozen list on page 66 and 67 to determine which fruits and vegetables should be purchased organically.**
 - **Daily Servings: 2 – 3**



- **Carbohydrates include whole grains, starchy vegetables and legumes, which are all complex carbs. Whole grains** are comprised of quinoa, sprouted-grain breads, brown rice, whole grain pasta and barley. Potatoes, carrots, beets and squash are considered starchy vegetables. Legumes include all beans, such as black beans, pinto beans and lentils.
 - **Three servings** of complex carbohydrates will provide you with fiber to make you feel full and provide energy throughout the day. Make sure to choose a serving from each category daily. Limit your carbs. A serving of oatmeal for breakfast, some beans in your salad or soup for lunch and 1/2 of a sweet potato during dinner is all you need.
 - **Daily Servings: 3**



- **Healthy fats** are comprised of oils, nuts and seeds. Good sources of fat from oils include olive oil, flaxseed oil, olives, avocado, non-GMO canola oil and coconut oil. Nuts that contain healthy fats are almonds, walnuts and pistachios. Sunflower, pumpkin and sesame seeds are also excellent choices.
 - Include healthy oils into your diet. Be creative. Try sautéing your food with coconut oil, add avocado to your salad, use olive oil as a salad dressing or eat a handful of almonds to meet your healthy fat goals.
 - **Daily Servings: 3 - 5**

Recent research about the Mediterranean Diet

As time goes by and fad diets come and go, the Mediterranean Diet continues to prove its worth. Current research concludes that it is the best diet for lowering the risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes. This diet is also easy to modify for diabetics, vegans, vegetarians and people with food allergies.

Below we highlight research that demonstrates support for our favorite diet.

Dr. Frank Hu, Professor of Nutrition and Epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, published an article in the New England Journal of Medicine on November 21, 2013 that showed the health benefits of eating nuts.

He reported that people who ate nuts every day:

- lived longer
- were less likely to die of cancer
- reduced their risk of type II diabetes and heart disease when compared to those who did not eat nuts.



This study took into account other lifestyle factors that might be contributors, such as people who ate nuts might be more inclined to exercise or eat healthy overall. Regardless of the other factors, the nut eaters still had better overall health, which is one of the many reasons nuts are a daily part of our recommended diet.

In an article published April 2013 in the New England Journal of Medicine, researchers in Spain conducted a study that divided adults with increased risk of cardiovascular disease ages 55-80 into 3 different groups to determine how eating “healthy fats” compared to a low fat diet.

- the first group consumed more than a ¼ cup of olive oil daily
- the second group consumed approximately 1 oz of walnuts, hazelnuts or almonds every day
- the third group followed a low fat diet

None of the groups were on restricted calorie diets.

The evidence showed that the groups who ate the nuts or had the olive oil had a 30% lower risk of having a heart attack, stroke or dying from heart disease than the low fat group.

Another article published in the British Medical Journal in October 2013 reported similar results for individuals who had already experienced an adverse event. The article reported that **“adopting a Mediterranean Diet after a heart attack is almost three times as powerful in reducing mortality as taking a statin drug.”** This statement was based on a study which revealed that “in high risk people, the Mediterranean Diet resulted in a 30% improvement over a low fat diet in terms of cardiovascular events.”

The Mediterranean Diet works because it lowers LDL (bad) cholesterol and triglycerides, while increasing your HDL (good) cholesterol. It has also been hypothesized that it may help the body process sugar and decrease insulin resistance, a physiological condition in which cells fail to respond to the normal actions of the hormone insulin.

As part of our Modified Mediterranean Diet, we recommend 3-6 servings of healthy fats every day, including olive oil.

The Omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA in fish and nuts have been found to have important biological functions in the central nervous system. EPA/DHA is a component of the very structure of your neurons. Evidence now suggests an association between depression and low dietary intake of Omega-3 fatty acids. It has also been shown to be beneficial for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

**Source: “Omega-3 fatty acids in the treatment of psychiatric disorders” Drugs 2005;65 (8):1051-9.*

“The evidence showed that the groups who ate the nuts or had the olive oil had a 30% lower risk of having a heart attack, stroke or dying from heart disease than the low fat group.”

As you read through the nutrition section, you will notice we strongly recommend **not skipping breakfast**. There are multiple studies that agree with us. In 2012, the Journal of Adolescent Health conducted a study in Spain that supports this idea. The researchers discovered that adolescents who ate regular meals and snacks were associated with “lower body fatness,” which was independent of their activity levels. Those who skipped breakfast showed the “highest body fatness” levels. Several other studies have also concluded that people who skip breakfast end up eating more calories later in the day and more empty calories, which leads to higher abdominal obesity.

What about diabetes and the Mediterranean Diet?

We know that while diabetes is a disease that begins with an inability to regulate blood sugar, it ends as cardiovascular disease. The first and primary system affected by diabetes is the circulatory system. Diabetics have double the risk of having a heart attack or stroke compared to non-diabetics. Heart attacks and strokes are the leading cause of death in people with diabetes according to the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse. The Mediterranean Diet has been shown to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease in diabetics.

In addition, the Mediterranean Diet has been known to:

- reduce oxidative stress
- decrease insulin resistance (the body’s inability to recognize or utilize insulin properly)
- be an overall anti-inflammatory due to its high fiber, high mono-unsaturated fat, low trans fat, low glycemic index and antioxidant rich food choices.

These attributes make it the perfect diet for diabetics to help manage their blood sugar. In 2010, the World Journal of diabetics published a study that showed an 83% reduction in the risk of developing diabetes, as well as lowered hemoglobin A1c levels, which reflect the average blood-glucose level for the past several months.

Participants also displayed a decrease in two hour post prandial glucose levels (levels after consuming a meal) with a greater adherence to the Mediterranean Diet. **However, the Paleo diet, a diet that removes all dairy, grains and sugars, has been shown to improve glucose tolerance more effectively than the Mediterranean Diet, even though both diets showed a reduction in waist circumference and weight. Therefore, we have modified the Mediterranean Diet for diabetics to minimize these categories.** *The key to experiencing the health benefits of the Mediterranean Diet is the moderate consumption of meats, dairy and whole grains with a larger emphasis on vegetables, fish, legumes, fruits and healthy fats.*

We have put together a way for you to easily track your servings in each of these categories. This will ensure that you are receiving the benefits of this healthy diet. Refer to the WE Diet and Exercise Tracker on page 88.

We feel confident that we are providing you with a well researched, healthy diet that is beneficial for your heart and your lifestyle. The food selections taste great, can be made in a snap and the variety allows everyone in the family to enjoy. To support you on this journey, we have chosen a wonderful cookbook, **5 Easy Steps to Healthy Cooking: 500 Recipes for Lifelong Wellness**, as a companion to this book to assist in your transition to healthy eating.



EMPOWERMENT TIP!

Nutrition is an art. Enjoy your life and become the artist creating your health and wellness.

The Modified Mediterranean Diet Food Guide

Superfoods are color coded in **green** for your convenience.

Category 1: Lean Protein		Serving Size	Category 2: Vegetables		Serving Size		
2-3 Daily servings		Approximately 150 calories per serving.	4 Daily servings (minimum)		Unlimited calories		
MEAT (less than 5% fat)			Artichokes	1 medium			
Beef	3 - 4 oz		Arugula	1/2 cup			
Buffalo	3 - 4 oz		Asparagus	4 medium spears			
Elk	3 - 4 oz		Bean sprouts	1/2 cup			
Lamb	3 - 4 oz		Beet greens	1 cup			
Venison	3 - 4 oz		Bok choy or baby bok choy	1/2 cup			
POULTRY			Broccoli	1 stalk			
Chicken breast	3 - 4 oz		Brussels sprouts	1/2 cup			
Cornish hen breast	3 - 4 oz		Cabbage	1/2 cup			
Turkey breast	3 - 4 oz		Cauliflower	3 florets			
SEAFOOD			Celery	1 stalk			
Fresh fish or shellfish	3 oz		Collards	1/2 cup			
Canned fish or shellfish	3/4 cup		Cucumber	1/2 cup			
See Clean Seafood Guide on page 69.			Eggplant	1/2 cup			
MEAT SUBSTITUTE			Endive	1 medium head			
Tempeh	4 oz		Escarole	1/2 cup			
Tofu (fresh)	6 - 8 oz		Green beans	1 cup			
Tofu (baked)	2 - 3 oz		Kale	1 cup			
Seitan	2 - 3 oz		Leeks	1 whole			
Soy or veggie burger	4 oz		Mushrooms	1/2 cup			
DAIRY AND EGGS			Mustard greens	1/2 cup			
Cottage cheese nonfat or low fat	3/4 cup		Okra	1/2 cup			
Feta cheese fat-free	2 oz		Onion	1 medium			
Mozzarella cheese part skim or nonfat	2 - 4 oz		Peppers	1 medium			
Parmesan cheese (grated)	6 tbsp		Radicchio	1/2 cup			
Ricotta cheese part skim or nonfat	4 oz		Radishes	1/2 cup			
Yogurt (unsweetened) soy, goat or Greek	6 oz		Scallions	1 stalk			
Eggs (whole)	2 eggs		Snow peas	1/2 cup			
Egg whites	3 whites+1 whole egg		Spinach	1/2 cup			
<p>All meat should be skinless and grilled, baked or roasted. Fish may be poached.</p> <p>Legumes may be substituted for a serving of protein.</p>			Sprouts	1/2 cup			
			Squash: zucchini, yellow, summer, spaghetti			1/2 cup	
			Swiss chard			1 cup	
			Tomatoes			1 medium	
			Turnip			1 cup	
			Vegetable juice (low sodium)			4 oz	

Category 3: Fruit	Serving Size	Category 4: Carbohydrates	Serving Size
2 - 3 Daily servings	Approximately 80 calories per serving	1 Daily serving per subcategory	Calories vary for each subcategory
Apple	1 medium	WHOLE GRAINS	Approximately 75-100 calories per serving
Apricot	3 medium	Amaranth	1/2 cup
Berries:		Basmati, brown or wild rice	1/2 cup
Blackberries	1 cup	Barley	1/2 cup
Blueberries	1 cup	Bread (mixed whole grain or 100% rye)	1 slice
Raspberries	1 cup	Buckwheat groats	1/2 cup
Strawberries	1 cup	Bulgur (cracked wheat)	1 cup
Cantaloupe	1/2 medium	Kashi ® 7 whole grain puffs cereal	1 cup
Cherries	15 cherries	Millet	1/2 cup
Fresh figs	2 figs	Pita (whole wheat)	1/2 pita
Grapefruit	1 whole	Quinoa	1/2 cup
Grapes	15 grapes	Tortillas (low-carb)	2 small or 1 large
Honeydew melon	1/4 small	Tortillas (whole wheat)	2 small or 1 large
Kiwi	2 kiwis	Whole grain rye crackers	2 crackers
Mango	1/2 medium	Whole oats (raw)	1/3 cup
Nectarines	2 small	Whole oats (cooked)	3/4 cup
Orange	1 large	Wheat berries	1/2 cup
Papaya	1 small	STARCH VEGETABLES	Approximately 45 calories per serving
Peaches	2 small	Beets	1/2 cup
Pear	1 medium	Carrots or baby carrots	1/2 cup
Persimmon	1/2 medium	Potato: yukon gold, new or red	1/2 medium
Pineapple	1/2 cup	Sweet potato or yam (baked)	1/2 medium
Plums	2 small	Winter squash: acorn or butternut	1/2 cup
Tangerines	2 small	LEGUMES	Approximately 110 calories per serving
Watermelon	2 cups	Beans: adzuki, black, black-eyed peas, cannellini, garbanzo, great northern, kidney (red), lima, mung, navy, pinto	1/2 cup
		Bean soup	3/4 cup
		Fat-free refried beans	1/2 cup
		Green soy beans (aka Edamame)	1/2 cup
		Hummus	1/4 cup
		Lentils	1/4 cup
		Split peas	1/4 cup
		Sweet green peas	1/4 cup

Category 5: Healthy Fats	Serving Size
Oils	
2 - 4 Daily servings	Approximately 40 calories per serving.
Plant Oils	
Avocado	1/4 slice of avocado
Coconut milk (light)	3 tbsp
Coconut milk (regular)	1 1/2 tbsp
Flaxseed oil (refrigerated)	1 1/2 tbsp
Olives	8-10 medium
Cooking Oils	
Canola oil (organic)	1 tsp
Coconut Oil	1 tsp
Ghee (clarified butter)	1 tsp
Grapeseed oil	1 tsp
Olive oil (preferably extra virgin)	1 tsp
Trans fat free spread	1 1/2 tsp
Oils should be cold pressed.	
NUTS & SEEDS	
1 Daily serving	Approximately 100 calories per serving.
Almonds or hazelnuts	10 - 12 whole
Cashews	7 - 8 whole
Coconut (unsweetened grated)	3 tbsp
Ground flax seeds	1 tsp=13 calories
Nut butter (almonds, cashews, peanuts, etc.)	1 tbsp
Peanuts	18 nuts
Pine nuts	2 tbsp
Pistachios	2 tbsp
Pumpkin seeds	2 tbsp
Sesame seeds	2 tbsp
Sunflower seeds	2 tbsp
Pecan or walnut	7 - 8 halves



EMPOWERMENT TIP!

We often refer to the **5 Easy Steps to Healthy Cooking:500 Recipes for Lifelong Wellness** cookbook. Look at the recipes we've chosen to see if they appeal to you. Then, look through the section they are in to find others you'd like to try.

“True healthcare reform starts in
your kitchen...

not in Washington.”

-Anonymous



HOW MUCH SHOULD I EAT?

Eyeball Your Serving Sizes

A picture is worth a thousand words...

Utilize this visual guide to get a rough estimate of your serving sizes - no measurements required!



1 Cup of Whole Grain Cereal



Tennis Ball



1/2 Cup of Fresh Vegetables or Fruit



Standard Light Bulb



3 - 4 oz of Meat/Poultry/Fish



Checkbook or Deck of Cards



2 oz of Cheese



1 Thin CD Case/3 Dominos/Tube of Lipstick



2 Tablespoons of Nut Butter



Golf Ball



1 Teaspoon of Oil



Quarter