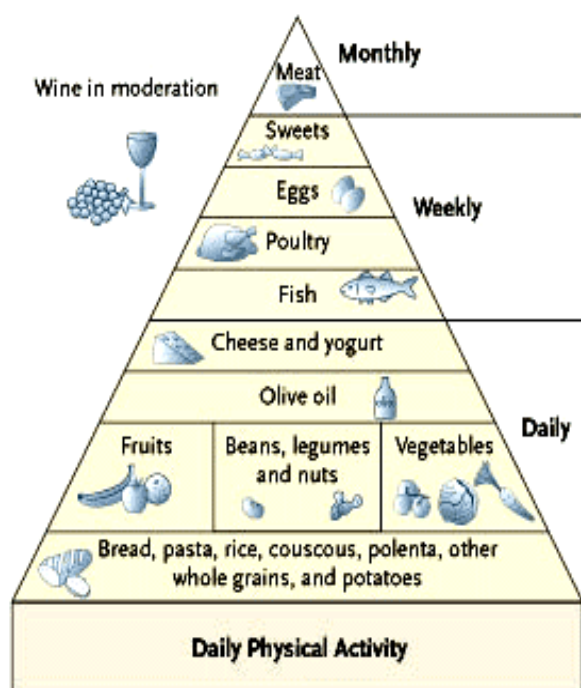


Mediterranean Diet Food Guide



People who live in the area around the Mediterranean Sea have traditionally had low risk of heart disease. Research studies show that when people in other parts of the world eat a diet similar to that eaten in Mediterranean countries, they reduce their risk of heart disease. The Mediterranean diet contains an abundance of fruit, vegetables, and vegetarian proteins, moderate amounts of whole grains, and small amounts of red meat. Regular use of fish, olive oil, and nuts makes this diet higher in fat than the typical heart healthy diet, but the fat is mostly unsaturated, which can be beneficial for the heart. A Mediterranean diet can be especially helpful for people who have high triglyceride and low HDL cholesterol levels. The pyramid to the left and the chart below describes types and amounts of foods included in a heart healthy Mediterranean diet.

Hu, F. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 2003; 348:2595

Adequate exercise is very important. Start with a base of 30-60 minutes of exercise 5 times a week. Moderate exercise like walking, biking, or swimming is recommended.

Food Groups and Number of servings	Serving sizes, examples, and notes		
Whole grains 4-6 per day	<i>1 slice whole wheat bread</i> <i>½ large whole grain bun</i> <i>6-inch whole wheat pita</i> <i>½ cup cooked whole grain cereals (oatmeal, cracked wheat)</i> <i>½ cup cooked whole wheat pasta, brown rice, or barley</i> <i>½ cup potatoes, corn, peas or winter squash</i> <i>1 small whole grain roll</i> <i>6 whole grain crackers</i> Whole grains are high in fiber and have less effect on blood sugar and triglyceride levels than refined, processed grains like white bread and pasta. Whole grains also keep the stomach full longer, making it easier to lose weight.		
Non-starchy vegetables 4-8 per day	<i>½ cup of cooked vegetables</i> <i>1 cup of raw vegetables</i> Non-starchy vegetables include broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, celery, carrots, tomatoes, eggplant, cucumbers, green beans, asparagus, zucchini, peppers, salad greens and mushrooms.		
Fruit 2-4 per day	<i>One small fresh fruit</i> <i>½ cup juice</i> <i>¼ cup dried fruit</i> Whole fruits are preferred because of the fiber they contain, but fruits canned in light syrup or their own juice, and frozen fruit with little or no added sugar are also good choices. Be careful with amounts of fruit juice since they contain as much sugar as regular soda – aim for 8 oz per day or less.		

Legumes and nuts 1-3 per day	<u>Legumes</u> ½ cup kidney, black, garbanzo, pinto, soy, navy beans, split peas, or lentils ¼ cup fat free refried beans or baked beans <u>Nuts and Seeds</u> 2 Tbsp sunflower or sesame seeds 1 Tbsp peanut butter 7-8 walnuts or pecans 20 peanuts 12-15 almonds Aim for 1-2 servings of nuts or seeds and 1-2 servings of legumes per day. Legumes are high in fiber, protein, and minerals. Nuts are high in fat, but the fat is mostly unsaturated, and may increase HDL without increasing LDL.
Healthy fat 4-6 per day	1 tsp olive or canola oil 2 tsp light margarine 1 Tbsp of regular salad dressing or 2 Tbsp of light salad dressing, made with oil 1 tsp regular mayonnaise 1/8 of an avocado 5 olives (limit these due to salt content if you have high blood pressure) These fats are mostly unsaturated and contain little or no trans fat, so they will not increase LDL levels. Remember that fats do contain concentrated calories, so keep the servings small, as recommended.
Low-fat dairy products 1-3 servings/day	1 cup of skim milk or light yogurt 1 oz of low-fat cheese Soy milk, yogurt, and cheese can take the place of dairy products. If servings of dairy or fortified soy are less than 2 per day, a calcium and vitamin D supplement is recommended.
Fish or shellfish 2-3 times a week	3 ounces (about the size of a deck of cards) Prepare fish by baking, sautéing, broiling, roasting, grilling or poaching. Choose fatty fishes like salmon, herring, sardines, or mackerel often. The fat in fish is high in omega-3 fats, so it has healthy effects on triglycerides and blood cells.
Poultry, if desired 1-3 times a week	3 ounces (about the size of a deck of cards) Bake, sauté, stir fry, roast or grill the poultry you eat, and eat it without the skin.
None to Moderate amounts of alcohol for some patients	People with high blood pressure or high triglycerides, or those taking certain medications may be advised to avoid alcohol completely. Ask your doctor to be sure. No more than one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men- One drink equals one 12 ounce beer, 4 ounces of wine, or 1½ ounces liquor (whiskey, vodka, brandy, etc).

Limit to **4 egg yolks** per week. Egg whites can be eaten in unlimited amounts.

Eat **sweets** infrequently – use fruit as your dessert.

Red meats (beef, pork, lamb and veal) can be included 3-4 times per month.

Weight Control - Even though the higher fat content of the Mediterranean diet can be healthy for your heart, large portions may lead to a high calorie intake and weight gain. If you are trying to lose weight, choose the smaller number of servings in each category, and make sure your servings sizes match those listed.

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