THE TRADITIONAL MEDITERRANEAN DIET

What is the Mediterranean Diet?
A diet based on the lifestyle and food intake patterns of individuals living in the countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea prior to 1960.

What foods are included?

High Consumption of
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Nuts
- Legumes (beans) & seeds
- Whole grains
- Olive oil
- Herbs and spices

Moderate consumption of
- Fish
- Cheese
- Red wine

Low consumption of
- Red meats

What are the other components of the lifestyle?
- Socialization while eating
- Physical activity

What does the research suggest about following this lifestyle?
- Longer life
- Lower rates of heart disease & stroke
- Lower rates of cancer (breast, colorectal)
- Lower rates of diabetes
- Improved weight loss in obese populations
- Improved cognitive function
- Possibly lower rates of hip fractures

What dietary features of the Mediterranean Diet are thought to increase longevity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Percent impact on longevity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate alcohol intake (as contrasted to high or none)</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low red meat intake</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive oil</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other features of the diet/lifestyle (fish, dairy, herbs, spices)</td>
<td>11%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How can I implement features of the Mediterranean Diet into my lifestyle?

*Lifestyle*
- Exercise (moderate intensity) at least 30 minutes per day at least 5 days per week
- Eat with others 😊

*Oils*
- Replace butter with olive oil when sautéing foods
- Replace other cooking oils (vegetable, canola, etc.) with olive oil
- Avoid using highly processed oils which are high in *trans* fat (some shortening and margarines)

*Meats*
- Consume fish 2-3 days per week
- Consume red meats 3-4 days per month

*Plants*
- Replace intake of red meats with beans, seeds and nuts multiple days per week
- Increase intake of fruits and vegetables
- Replace refined grains with whole grains (look for food labels that state “100% whole grain” on the label)

*Drinks*
- Consume red wine in moderation (if you do not currently consume alcohol, it is not recommended that you start consuming alcohol to receive these health benefits)
- Avoid overconsumption of alcohol

*Snacks and Sweets*
- Limit intake of refined sugars (beverages, desserts, snacks)
- Limit intake of salt (many processed foods, canned foods, fast foods, snacks)

*References*