

# Mediterranean Diet



## What is the Mediterranean Diet?

More than just a “diet”, a style of eating which emphasizes plant-based foods and healthy fats. It is a balanced and heart-healthy eating pattern inspired by traditional cuisines of countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. Foods emphasized include fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats while limiting red meat, refined carbohydrates, and processed foods.



## What are the benefits of the Mediterranean Diet?

Extensive research supports its numerous benefits: lowering risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, promoting blood sugar and blood pressure control, and maintaining a healthy body weight.

This eating pattern can support heart health by reducing saturated and trans fat intake and encouraging unsaturated fats such as omega-3 fatty acids. It limits sodium and refined carbohydrates. Anti-inflammation is key as it promotes foods high in fiber and antioxidants.



## Tips For Success

**Embrace plant-based foods:** Prioritize vegetables, fruits, legumes, and whole grains. Make them the core of your meals for a nutrient-rich diet.

**Choose healthy fats:** Swap out saturated fat sources for unsaturated fat sources including nuts, seeds, avocados, and fatty fish. Ex: choose olive oil instead of butter for cooking.

**Incorporate fish/lean proteins:** Include fish, especially fatty fish like salmon, in your meals regularly. Other lean proteins include poultry and legumes.

**Limit red meat:** Consume red meat sparingly, and when you do, choose lean cuts.

**Herbs and spices:** Instead of salt, use herbs and spices to add flavor to your dishes.

**Dairy in moderation:** Include moderate amounts of Greek yogurt and cheese for calcium while being mindful of portion sizes.

**Whole, unprocessed foods:** Choose whole, minimally processed foods over highly processed options.



Everyone's dietary needs are unique, and what works for one person may not work for another. Work with your registered dietitian to develop a personalized nutrition plan that meets your needs and preferences. With a healthy diet and regular physical activity, you can manage your type 2 diabetes and improve your overall health and wellbeing.



## General Recommendations

Food	Serving	Serving Size
Fresh vegetables + fruits	2-3 servings of fruit per day 4 or more servings of vegetables per day	fruit: 1/2 cup - 1 cup vegetables: 1/2 cup cooked or 1 cup raw
Whole grains	3-6 servings per day	1/2 cup cooked grains, 1 slice of bread; other foods may vary, check nutrition labels
Legumes	3 or more servings per week	1/2 cup
Seafood	3 servings per week	3-5 oz
Nuts/Seeds	3-4 servings per week	1/4 cup nuts or 2 tbsp nut butter
Olive Oil	1-4 servings per day	1 tbsp
Poultry	once daily	3 oz
Dairy	once daily	1 cup milk or yogurt, 1.5 oz natural cheese
Red Meat	none or no more than 1 serving per week	3 oz

# Mediterranean Food Pyramid



# Sample One-Day Meal Plan

## **Breakfast:**

- Greek yogurt with fresh berries and a drizzle of honey
- 1 whole grain toast topped with 1/2 an avocado and a sprinkle of chia seeds
- 1/4 cup of almonds

## **Lunch:**

- 3 oz grilled chicken breast or chickpea salad with greens, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, olives, and feta cheese. Dress with olive oil and balsamic vinegar.
- 1/2 cup - 1 cup of quinoa

## **Snack:**

- carrots or cucumber sticks
- 1 serving of hummus

## **Dinner:**

- 3-5 oz grilled salmon with herbs and lemon
- roasted vegetables with olive oil
- 1/2 cup - 1 cup whole grain bulgur or brown rice

## **Dessert:**

- fresh fruit salad with a sprinkle of mint

# Recommended Foods

<b>Vegetables</b>	<b>Fruits</b>	<b>Seafood</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Artichokes</li><li>• Arugula</li><li>• Beets</li><li>• Broccoli</li><li>• Brussels sprouts</li><li>• Cabbage</li><li>• Carrots</li><li>• Celery</li><li>• Celeriac</li><li>• Chicory</li><li>• Collard greens</li><li>• Cucumbers</li><li>• Eggplant</li><li>• Fennel</li><li>• Kale</li><li>• Leeks</li><li>• Lemons</li><li>• Lettuce</li><li>• Mushrooms</li><li>• Onions</li><li>• Peas</li><li>• Peppers</li><li>• Potatoes</li><li>• Pumpkin</li><li>• Radishes</li><li>• Scallions</li><li>• Shallots</li><li>• Spinach</li><li>• Sweet potatoes</li><li>• Zucchini</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apples</li><li>• Apricots</li><li>• Avocados</li><li>• Cherries</li><li>• Clementines</li><li>• Dates</li><li>• Figs</li><li>• Grapefruit</li><li>• Grapes</li><li>• Melons</li><li>• Nectarines</li><li>• Olives</li><li>• Oranges</li><li>• Peaches</li><li>• Pears</li><li>• Pomegranates</li><li>• Strawberries</li><li>• Tangerines</li><li>• Tomatoes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clams</li><li>• Crab</li><li>• Eel</li><li>• Flounder</li><li>• Lobster</li><li>• Mackerel</li><li>• Mussels</li><li>• Octopus</li><li>• Oysters</li><li>• Salmon</li><li>• Sardines</li><li>• Sea bass</li><li>• Shrimp</li><li>• Squid</li><li>• Tilapia</li><li>• Tuna</li><li>• Yellowtail</li></ul>

# Recommended Foods

<b>Nuts/Seeds/Legumes</b>	<b>Herbs/Spices</b>	<b>Dairy</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Almonds</li><li>• Cannellini beans</li><li>• Chickpeas</li><li>• Cashews</li><li>• Fava beans</li><li>• Green beans</li><li>• Hazelnuts</li><li>• Kidney beans</li><li>• Lentils</li><li>• Pine nuts</li><li>• Pistachios</li><li>• Sesame seeds</li><li>• Split peas</li><li>• Walnuts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anise</li><li>• Basil</li><li>• Bay leaf</li><li>• Chiles</li><li>• Cloves</li><li>• Cumin</li><li>• Fennel</li><li>• Garlic</li><li>• Lavender</li><li>• Marjoram</li><li>• Mint</li><li>• Oregano</li><li>• Parsley</li><li>• Pepper</li><li>• Rosemary</li><li>• Sage</li><li>• Sumac</li><li>• Tarragon</li><li>• Thyme</li><li>• Za'atar</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Brie</li><li>• Chevre</li><li>• Feta</li><li>• Manchego</li><li>• Parmigiano-Reggiano</li><li>• Pecorino</li><li>• Ricotta</li><li>• Yogurt</li></ul>