



Mediterranean Diet for Beginners

The Mediterranean diet may be the healthiest diet in the world. Rather than a strict meal plan, it's a way of eating that emphasizes enjoying whole foods and regular physical activity. Here, we give a blueprint to follow the Mediterranean diet-whether you want to make small changes or overhaul your entire way of eating.

What is the Mediterranean Diet?

The Mediterranean diet is an eating pattern that follows the traditional way of eating in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. You don't have to live in Italy, Spain, or France to benefit from this diet, however; many people are transitioning to it for the range of health benefits it provides.

The Mediterranean diet isn't a strict plan. Rather, it's a way of eating that emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and olive oil. Fish is the main protein source instead of red meat, pork, or poultry. And yes, it includes red wine-in moderation. Eggs and poultry are occasionally consumed, but red meat and processed foods are not eaten regularly.

The Mediterranean diet is associated with lower cholesterol, reduced risk of heart disease and stroke, lower risk of Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases and a longer life. Emerging research shows it may also reduce risk of, and benefit those with, depression, anxiety, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers.

How to Get Started with the Mediterranean Diet

The idea is to mimic the healthy way of eating traditionally modeled by people in Mediterranean countries. When in doubt, follow this simple rule of fractions: Make half your plate fruits and vegetables, one-quarter of your plate whole grains, and one-quarter of your plate healthy protein.

Focus on Whole Foods

Processed foods are not a traditional part of the Mediterranean diet. If it comes in a package, check the ingredients list. Choose foods with just one to three whole-food ingredients like bulgur or oats. Whole foods include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, legumes, fish, and olive oil.

Make Vegetables the Main Part of Your Meal

Fruits and vegetables should make up the bulk of your meals. The Mediterranean diet emphasizes 7 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables each day, but even 3 to 5 servings per day have been shown to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. Think of small ways you can add ore vegetables to your meals, like adding spinach to your eggs, loading up your sandwich with avocado and cucumber, and having an apple with nut butter for a snack instead of crackers.

Swap Red Meat for Fish

Fatty fish like salmon, mackerel, tuna, and herring are the main protein sources in the Mediterranean diet. These fish contain high does of omega-3 fatty acids, which reduce inflammation and improve cholesterol levels. White fish and shellfish are also good lean protein sources but aren't as high in omega-3s. Red and processed meats are eaten rarely. Chicken, turkey, eggs, cheese, and yogurt can be enjoyed weekly or daily but in moderate portions.

Cook with Olive Oil Instead of Butter

Olive oil is the main fat source in the Mediterranean diet. Total fat isn't as important as the type of fat. The Mediterranean diet emphasizes eating more heart-healthy fats- poly- and monounsaturated fats- and fewer saturated and trans fats.

Saturated and trans fats raise LDL ("bad") cholesterol. Swap butter for heart-healthy fats like olive oil to lower your cholesterol and improve your heart health.

Rethink Your Dairy

America tends to be a cheese-on-everything society. Instead of dumping cheese on top of everything, aim to eat a variety of flavorful cheeses in moderation. Choose strong-flavored cheeses like feta or Parmesan (a smaller amount suffices), and skip processed cheeses, like American.

Enjoy yogurt, too, but choose plain, fermented and Greek, when possible, Skip the high-sugar, flavored yogurts; too much added sugar isn't good for your health.

Replace Refined Grains with Whole Grains

Sway white rice and pasta for whole grains like bulgur, barley, and farro. Whole grains are a mainstay of the Mediterranean diet and boast a range of benefits from lowering cholesterol to stabilizing blood sugars to weight loss. Whole grains are also high in B vitamins and fiber.

Beans and legumes have similar health benefits and are also a part of the Mediterranean diet.

Snack on Nuts

Don't be scared of the fat in nuts. Like olive oil and avocados, nuts are high in poly- and monounsaturated fats- the healthy fats. They have protein and fiber too. Fat, protein, and fiber are the perfect trio for staying full, keeping blood sugar stable, lowering cholesterol, and reducing inflammation. Nosh on a quarter-cup of nuts between lunch and dinner. Walnuts have the most omega-3s, but all nuts contain healthy fats. Pair them with a fruit or vegetable if you need more to keep you full.

Skip the sugar (most of the time)

Processed cookies, crackers, refined flours, and sugars are not a part of the Mediterranean diet and shouldn't be eaten often. Save cookies and ice cream for special occasions. In the Mediterranean region, people indulge in treats

like gelato and baklava in moderation. Otherwise, they eat fresh fruit, including dates and figs, to satisfy sugar cravings.

Enjoy Red Wine in Moderation

That's about 5 ounces per day for women and 10 ounces per day for men. In you don't currently drink, you don't need to start drinking.





Ladder Safety

It's easy to fall off a ladder because they're everywhere—at both work and home—and we use them for everything from cleaning gutters to getting items from high shelves. So, it's not surprising that about 20 percent of workplace falls involve ladders, and around 81 percent of all fall injuries requiring an emergency room visit are related to ladders.

Despite this, some workplaces expect employees to use a ladder without any training or information. This brief overview of ladder safety makes a great starting point for general ladder training. Remember to review issues specific to your location—and provide hands-on ladder training. There's no substitute for actual experience.

Selecting a ladder

Ladders should be selected based on how they will be used. Light duty ladders may work for changing a light bulb at home but have no place on a construction site. Here are other considerations:

Pick the right material

- Wood - electrically nonconductive, but can be heavy and can rot if wood is untreated
- Aluminum - unsafe around electricity; lightweight and corrosion-resistant
- Fiberglass - strong, lightweight, and electrically nonconductive, but can be expensive.

Inspect a ladder like a pro!

Ladder inspections should be performed by a “competent person,”— someone able to identify workplace hazards and who has the authority and the resources to fix them.

Here's what to look for:

- Ensure bottom feet are unbroken and slip-resistant pads are in place.
- Inspect all rungs, rails, shelves, spreaders, and rung locks. Nothing should be cracked, bent, missing, loose, or rusted.
- Secure all bolts and rivets.
- Check for foreign material on ladder, like oil or grease.
- All labels should be in place and readable.
- Tag ladders “out of service” until repaired or discarded.

Setting up a ladder

- Find a stable surface, and level out uneven ground.
- Secure ladders to prevent movement.

- Allow no debris or clutter around ladder.
- Open ladders all the way, and always put locking mechanism in place.
- Lock or guard door if ladder blocks a doorway.
- Never place ladders on boxes, barrels, or other materials to make it taller.
- Never use other items (like boxes, milk crates, or chairs) as ladders.
- Keep ladder free from mud, grease, or other substances.
- Consider traffic around ladder and act to protect the set-up.
- Check for hazards during set-up, such as power lines, nails, beams, or sharp edges.

Using a ladder

- Face the ladder when ascending, descending, or performing work.
- Maintain 3 points of contact (both feet and one hand or both hands and one foot).
- Climb the ladder holding the rungs, not the side rails.
- Climb completely past the landing before stepping over.
- Stay centered using the “belt buckle rule”– keep your belt buckle between the side rails
- Store your ladder in a well-ventilated area.
- Secure ladders to prevent tip overs or tripping using cords, straps, wall brackets, or racks.
- Don’t store materials on ladders.

Transporting a ladder

- Lift ladder using your leg muscles.
- Carry ladder close to your body.
- Balance ladder on your shoulder.
- Position ladder so top is above your head and bottom is near the ground.
- Set ladder down when opening and closing doors.
- If two people carry a ladder, they should be on the same side.

