

The Mediterranean Diet Life Plan for Health

By Renee Lea-Currie, Ph.D.

March 7, 2015



What is the Mediterranean “diet” everyone is talking about as the next best diet craze? It is not a DIE-et but a plan of approaching fresh wholesome foods and a spirit of peace. The foods and lifestyle of the people living in the countries that border the Mediterranean Sea (*Turkey, Spain, Italy, Greece, Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Crete, Morocco, France, Israel, and Lebanon*) have been reported to contribute to the longer life, less heart disease and diabetes of people living in the area. Why? Key points for the Mediterranean life plan include:

- Lots of activity, especially walking
- Use of olive oil instead of butter or margarine
- Use of fresh vegetables instead of processed foods
- Lots of fresh seafood and fish such as salmon (high in omega-3 fats)
- Rare use of red meats
- Moderate use of dairy and eggs
- Use of whole grains daily
- Use of nuts, legumes (lentils, beans, etc.)
- Fresh fruit instead of high sugar items as dessert
- More grilled or sautéed foods instead of deep fat frying
- Use of herbs & spices instead of a lot of salt to season foods
- Enjoying meals with family and/or friends instead of alone, in front of TV or rushed at work
- Taking time to be thankful
- Occasional use of a glass of wine –*NOTE: The scientific data changes frequently on if this actually counts as a benefit or a harm to health. **My advise-Avoid alcohol***

This is a simple life plan involving more use of olive oil instead of butter or margarine meaning less heart damaging saturated and artificial trans fats found in processed foods. Olive oil does not lend itself to Southern-style deep fat frying so there is more grilled or sautéed foods. Olive oil is also anti-inflammatory and has been reported to help with arthritis and skin conditions. Grape seed oil is another heat stable oil more suited to high heat frying for those rare occasions. It also makes a great heat protectant for hair when blow drying or flat ironing hair.

High UNSATURATED unprocessed fats such as nuts, avocado, olive oil can be part of a healthy life plan when consumed in moderation. If you take TIME to enjoy the meal, you give your body time to recognize satiety signals that tell you when you are full and should stop eating. High fats keep you full longer and make you more satisfied and you feel less bloated and content. When you eat less and move more, you lose weight.

Whole grains can be gluten-free grain such as quinoa or whole grain wheat products. Whole grain unprocessed foods help prevent and manage diabetes due to the high fiber content. The plan is simple to adapt to the every person based on their tastes. Vegetarian and vegan eaters can enjoy the emphasis on fresh vegetables, plant based oils, plant proteins and fresh fruit. Don't stress. Just eat like people of the Bible and be healthy.

Mediterranean Life Plan Word Search

N L G I E S W H O R D I F O Y
O T E N S G E H D O O F A E S
I U Q B I R Y L J K F E K U D
T N A X A K A P B G S R H E N
A I D F P N L E T A U U E O E
X S P Y H J O A L T T S M T I
A I H S E R F N W S E E E D R
L A C T I V I T Y P O R G R F
E G R E E C E F A L C Y M E W
R N A E N A R R E T I D E M V
H Y I V W U G G Y L I M A F O
S S T A I F U S P C Q I Y F L
I N V T P M U U T O I L B U I
F E S B E S V N W U R P I I V
G Z Q S I T A L Y O N W L O E

ACTIVITY

CRETE
EGYPT
FAMILY
FISH
FRESH
FRIENDS
FRUITS
FUN
GRAPESEED
GREECE
ISRAEL
ITALY
LEBANON

LEGUMES

LIBYA
MEDITERRANEAN
NUTS
OIL
OLIVE
RELAXATION
SEA
SEAFOOD
SPAIN
TUNISIA
TURKEY
VEGETABLES
WALKING

***Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or
whatsoever ye do, do all to the
glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31***

Conversion Chart

Butter/Margarine	Olive Oil
1 teaspoon	3/4 teaspoon
1 tablespoon	2 1/4 teaspoons
2 tablespoons	1 1/2 tablespoons
1/4 cup	3 tablespoons
1/3 cup	1/4 cup
1/2 cup	1/4 cup + 2 tablespoons
2/3 cup	1/2 cup
3/4 cup	1/2 cup + 1 tablespoon
1 cup	3/4 cup