WHAT SHOULD I EAT?!

OUR 3-STEP GUIDE TO CHOOSING THE BEST MEDITERRANEAN DIET FOODS FOR YOUR BODY

Mediterranean diet edition

This easy-to-use chart shows you how to make healthier nutrition choices for achieving your goals, while enjoying the Mediterranean diet foods you love.

1 KNOW YOUR FOODS

Nutritional value varies, but don't think of food as "good" or "bad." Seeing it on a spectrum from "eat more" to "eat less" helps you make better choices without branding anything offlimits.

EAT MORE

PROTEIN

Eggs and egg whites; Fish; Shellfish; Chicken; Duck breast and thighs; Turkey; Plain Greek yogurt; Cultured cottage cheese; Tempeh; Tofu; Edamame; Natto; Beans and lentils

CARBS

Beans and lentils; Oatmeal, rolled, and old-fashioned oats; Buckwheat; Quinoa; Whole-grain, black, and wild rice; Sorghum; Farro; Millet; Potatoes; Amaranth; Plain non-Greek yogurt; Plain kefir; Fresh and frozen fruit; Corn; Barley; Sweet potatoes; Taro; Yuca

Whole or sprouted grain breads, pasta, cereals, tortillas, pastas, and wraps

FATS

Olive oil; Walnut oil; Avocados and avocado oil; Olives; Cheese, aged < 6 months; Egg yolks; Seeds: chia, flax, hemp, and sesame; Cashews; Pistachios; Almonds; Brazil nuts; Pecans; Pistachio & walnut peanut butter; Olives; Pesto made with extra virgin olive oil; Nut butters from other nuts in this category; Fresh unsweetened coconut; Walnuts

Avocados and dressings with oils in this category

Prioritize lean, minimally-processed sources of protein.

Focus on whole, minimally-processed sources of carbohydrates that pack lots of nutrition and fiber, and include a mix of starches and colorful fruits.

Aim for a mix of whole-food fats (like nuts and seeds), blended whole foods (like nut butters), and pressed oils (like olive and avocado).

EAT SOME

PROTEIN

Uncultured cottage cheese; Beef; Bison; Lamb; Pork; Wild game; Other meats: goat, camel, kangaroo, crocodile; Minimally-processed lean deli meat; Textured vegetable protein; Canadian bacon; Meat jerky; Poultry sausage; Protein powders; Sabar; Tempeh bacon; Bean and veggie burgers*

*These only count as your protein source if a mere protein/carb option is offered to you. Otherwise, they count as the carbohydrate source (as they contain more carbohydrates than protein).

CARBS

Couscous; White rice; Granola; Instant or flavored oats; Milk; Vegetable juices; Flavored yogurt; Flavored kefir; Pancakes and waffles; Wholegrain crackers; Gluten-free granola bars; Canned, dried, and pureed unsweetened fruit; Bean and pulse pasta; White bagels, breads, English muffins, pitas, and wraps

FATS

High and light olive oil; Expeller pressed canola oil; Sesame oil; Flaxseed oil; Coconut oil / milk; Fish and algae oil; Dark chocolate; Marinades and dressings with oils in this category; Peanut oil and other nut oils; Cream; Cheese aged <6 months; Flavored nuts and nut butters; Trail mix; High oleic sunflower oil; High oleic safflower oil

Often rich in carbohydrates as well, with sources of varying quality.

These nutrient-dense foods are healthy, but they are also very calorie-dense and contain little nutrition other than fat and fat-soluble vitamins.

EAT LESS

PROTEIN

Fried meats; Chicken fingers, nuggets, and wings; High fat ground meat; Highfat sausages; Processed soy; Processed deli meats; Protein bars; Pepperoni sticks; High-mercury fish

CARBS

Cereal bars; Fruit juices; Honey, molasses, syrups, & jellies; Canned, dried, and pureed fruit with added sugar; Soda; Crackers; Foods with 10+g added sugar; Pretzels; Sugar; Flavored milk

FATS

Butter; Margarine; Processed cheese; Corn oil; Cottonseed oil; Sunflower oil; Canola oil; Soybean oil; Safflower oil; Marinades and dressings with oils in this category; Vegetable shortening; French fools made with 10+g added sugar; Hydrogenated oils and trans fats; Shortening

These foods are also rich sources of fats, so be mindful of both their carbohydrate and fat content.

Candy bars; Donuts; Cookies; Chips; Fries; Pastries; Muffins; Cakes; Bacon; Sausage

ALCOHOL

The Mediterranean diet is associated with red wine, but that doesn't mean you should drink alcohol. Alcohol contains unique risks and benefits, we recommend drinking moderately, counting it as an "eat less" carb or fat serving.

1 serving of beer, cider, or light wine = 1 carb

1 serving of dessert wine, cordial or highballs/cocktails = 1 carb + 1 fat

Wondering about portions? Check out https://www.precisionnutrition.com/nutrition-calculator.

What does it mean to drink moderately? Learn more: https://www.precisionnutrition.com/quit-drinking

VEGETABLES

Veggies are always an "eat more" food. For a variety of nutrients, try to "eat the rainbow!"

EAT THE RAINBOW

Beets; Radicchio; Radishes; Red cabbage; Tomatoes; Red leaf lettuce; Radish; Red peppers; Red onions; Purple asparagus; Purple cauliflower; Rutabaga; Eggplant; Purple carrots; Purple potatoes; Purple cabbage; Pumpkin; Orange peppers; Yellow peppers; Acorn squash; Carrots; Butternut squash; Summer squash; Yellow beets; Yellow carrots; White carrot; Shallots; Cauliflower; Mushrooms; Jerusalem artichoke; Garlic; Onions; Romaine lettuce; Cucumbers; Lettuce; Collards; Spinach; Green beans; Celery; Cabbage; Broccoli; Kale; Chinese cabbage; Arugula; Brussels sprouts; Snap peas; Asparagus; Green peppers

Eating a variety of colorful fruit and starchy vegetables (like potatoes) also helps you "eat the rainbow," though these foods live in the carbohydrate category.

Not a veggie lover? Add herbs, spices, and aromatics, which enhance flavor and provide additional health benefits.
To learn how, check out https://www.precisionnutrition.com/create-the-perfect-meal-infographic
and https://www.precisionnutrition.com/dont-like-vegetables-infographic

2 BASE FOOD CHOICES ON YOUR GOALS

The proportions of your food intake that come from the "eat more," "eat some," and "eat less" categories will depend on how you eat now, and what your goals are.

"eat more" "eat some" "eat less"

THESE PROPORTIONS MAY WORK FOR YOU IF...

- you want to generally improve your health.
- you're new to exercise or exercise moderately.
- you want to look, feel, and perform better.
- you want to significantly improve your health.
- you exercise moderately, but your goal is to event like a half-marathon or obstacle course.
- you want to look, feel, and perform a little better than average.
- you want to significantly improve your health, or maintain a high degree of health.
- you are training for a major athletic event like a marathon or triathlon.
- you want above-average body composition, athletic performance, and/or recovery.
- you love eating this way, and you want to make this you much healthier!
- you're preparing for a bodybuilding, physique, or elite athletic competition.
- you are paid for your body's looks or performance.

3 ADJUST FOR YOUR PREFERENCES AND LIFESTYLE

Your "eat more," "eat some," and "eat less" list is unique to you and may evolve as your goals, likes, and dislikes shift over time. Use the table below to note your preferred foods.

CREATE YOUR OWN SPECTRUM

PROTEIN	CARBS	FATS	VEGGIES
Green foods I like or want to try:	Green foods I like or want to try:	Green foods I like or want to try:	Red, orange and yellow veggies:
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
Yellow foods I want to incorporate:	Yellow foods I want to incorporate:	Yellow foods I want to incorporate:	Green, blue and purple veggies:
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
Red foods I want to indulge in:	Red foods I want to indulge in:	Red foods I want to indulge in:	White veggies:
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2

HOW TO ADD FOODS TO THE SPECTRUM

At some point, you're going to want to eat foods that aren't on our spectrums. Here's how to categorize them.

FIRST, FIGURE OUT THE MACRO CATEGORY:

- **Which macronutrient delivers the majority of the calories?** Classifying a food as the macronutrient that delivers the most calories is generally a safe bet.
- **Which eating style do you follow?** For example, with most approaches, butternut squash would count as a veggie. For someone eating low-carb or keto, it might be a source of carbohydrates.
- **How is this food commonly eaten?** Perhaps as a protein, starchy side, or fat-rich topping?

NOW, DETERMINE ITS PLACE ON THE SPECTRUM:

How close is it to a whole food?

Generally, the more processed a food, the further it moves toward "eat less."

REMEMBER, YOU'RE THE BOSS

We've given you some ideas to get started. But YOU know best what works for you. Sustainable nutrition always prioritizes:

- **the foods and flavors you truly enjoy,**
- **the things you know how to cook or prep,**
- **and the portions that make sense for YOU.**

For the full article explaining this infographic, visit:
www.precisionnutrition.com/mediterranean-food-list-infographic

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