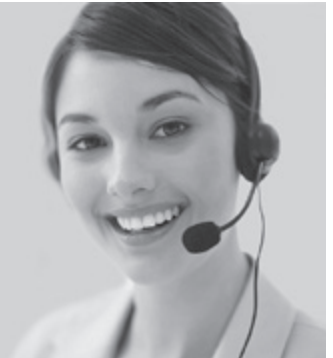


“It was great to talk with you.

Thank you for your interest in the Mediterranean diet. I hope you find this tip sheet helpful.

Please give me a call if you have more questions about this or other topics.

As your health coach, I’m ready to help in any way I can.”



The Mediterranean diet is one of the healthiest ways to eat. It is also delicious!

It is based on the traditional eating style in countries along the Mediterranean Sea, including Greece, Spain, and southern Italy. The diet features:

- A variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, cooked dried beans/peas/lentils, nuts, and seeds each day.
- Moderate amounts of low-fat dairy products (milk, cheese, yogurt) daily or weekly.
- Fish at least twice a week.
- Moderate amounts of poultry and eggs no more than several times a week.
- Small amounts of red meat no more than a few times a month.
- Olive oil and nuts as the main source of added fat.
- Sweets, desserts, or sugary drinks only a few times a week.
- Red wine (optional); no more than one glass a day for women and two for men.
- Herbs and spices (reduces the need for salt to flavor foods).

Compared to the typical American diet, the Mediterranean diet is:

- Lower in dairy.
- Higher in seafood.
- Higher in fruits.
- Lower in refined grains, added sugar, and salt.

Researchers looked at the eating patterns of 1.5 million healthy adults. Following a Mediterranean diet was linked to:

- Less risk of death from heart disease and cancer.
- Less risk of Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s diseases.

Other studies have shown that the diet may help prevent type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, heart attack, stroke, and depression.



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UPMC HEALTH PLAN

The Mighty Mediterranean Diet

The table below compares a sample day from a typical American diet and a Mediterranean one:

Sample Day (American)	Sample Day (Mediterranean)
Breakfast	
3 medium slices pork bacon 2 eggs, fried in the bacon fat 2 slices white toast spread with 1 tablespoon salted butter	1 cup plain, fat-free yogurt 1 medium banana 1 small (2½ -oz.) 100% whole-wheat bagel spread with 1 tablespoon peanut butter
Mid-morning Snack	
1 medium glazed doughnut	None
Lunch	
Cheeseburger (McDonald's) Large french fries (McDonald's) 32-ounce Coke	Vegetarian cheeseburger (100% whole-wheat hamburger bun, 1 veggie burger patty, 1½ oz. reduced-fat cheddar cheese, 4 slices tomato) 5 slices green pepper 1 medium orange
Afternoon Snack	
2 (1.6 oz.) milk chocolate bars	¼ cup almonds, unroasted, unsalted
Dinner	
2 cups beef and macaroni with cheese sauce (Hamburger Helper™)	2 oz. grilled salmon, seasoned with lemon juice, herbs, and 1 teaspoon olive oil 1 cup brown rice, seasoned with ½ tablespoon toasted sesame seeds and herbs Spinach salad (1 cup fresh spinach leaves, ¼ cup sliced fresh mushrooms, ½ cup grated carrots, tossed with 2 tablespoons olive oil and 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar) ½ cup corn, cooked from frozen 1 medium pear
Evening Snack	
2 chocolate chip cookies (2 inches across)	1 cup plain, fat-free yogurt ½ cup blueberries

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Sample Day (American)	Sample Day (Mediterranean)
Daily Nutrient Totals*	
Calories: 3,529	Calories: 1,994
Empty calories: 1,354	Empty calories: 64
Total fat: 43% calories (target: 20-35%)	Total fat: 36% calories (target: 20-35%)
Saturated fat: 18% calories (target: <10%)	Saturated fat: 7% calories (target: <10%)
Sodium: 5,395 mg (target: <2,300 mg)	Sodium: 1,954 mg (target: <2,300 mg)
Omega-3 fats: 42 mg	Omega-3 fats: 714 mg
Dietary fiber: 17 grams (target: 25-38 grams)	Dietary fiber: 36 grams (target: 25-38 grams)

*Totals from the USDA's SuperTracker. Available at www.supertracker.usda.gov/. Targets are from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015. Available at www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015. Accessed on February 1, 2018.

Note about the sample menus:

1. Many adults need fewer calories than shown, even for the Mediterranean diet. Ask your health coach about your calorie goal.
2. "Empty calories" are from saturated fat, *trans* fat, alcohol, and sugar.
3. A Mediterranean diet that includes added salt and processed or salty foods, such as olives, may be high in sodium. These items are limited in the sample day given.
4. No target has been set for omega-3 fats. Talk with your doctor about what amount is right for you. Aim to get omega-3 fats from food. Rich sources include fatty fish (such as salmon, sardines, and tuna), canola and soybean oils, green leafy vegetables, and walnuts. Take fish oil pills only with your doctor's approval.

Compared to a typical American diet, the Mediterranean diet is:

- More filling (a much greater volume of food) for fewer calories.
- Lower in empty calories, total fat, and saturated fat.
- Higher in health-promoting omega-3 fats and fiber.

The Mediterranean diet offers so many health benefits and delicious food!

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UPMC HEALTH PLAN

Take Action

	Check when completed																	
<p>My SMART Goal for This Week</p> <p>In the lines below, name three foods you often eat that do <i>not</i> fit a Mediterranean diet. For each one, name a food that would be a better fit.</p> <p>Example:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Usual Choice</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Better Fit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>a) Hamburger</td> <td>Fish</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b) Ice cream</td> <td>Yogurt with fresh fruit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c) Bacon on a salad</td> <td>Canned chickpeas or black beans</td> </tr> </table> <p>My usual and “more Mediterranean” choices:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Usual Choice</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Better Fit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>a) _____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b) _____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c) _____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> </table> <p>Choose one of your three ideas above and set a SMART* goal for it. Put it into action this week. Check the box when you have done so.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>		Usual Choice	Better Fit	a) Hamburger	Fish	b) Ice cream	Yogurt with fresh fruit	c) Bacon on a salad	Canned chickpeas or black beans	Usual Choice	Better Fit	a) _____	_____	b) _____	_____	c) _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usual Choice	Better Fit																	
a) Hamburger	Fish																	
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Usual Choice	Better Fit																	
a) _____	_____																	
b) _____	_____																	
c) _____	_____																	



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UPMC HEALTH PLAN

Staying on the Path to Wellness

When you are ready, choose one or two more usual choices that you could swap for “more Mediterranean” options. Set a weekly SMART goal for each one. Write your goals below. Check the boxes when you have completed them.

- _____
- _____

*SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic, and Timely. For example, “On Saturday, I will buy nonfat yogurt and fresh fruit. I will have that for dessert twice next week instead of ice cream.”

The information in this tip sheet is for educational purposes only and is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Before making changes, always talk to your doctor about what is right for you.

Sources:

- Mediterranean diet: A heart-healthy eating plan. Mayo Clinic. Available at www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/mediterranean-diet/. Accessed February 1, 2018.
- USDA Food Patterns: Healthy Mediterranean-Style Eating Pattern. 2010-2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Available at <https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-4/>. Accessed February 1, 2018.
- Mediterranean Diet Pyramid. Oldways Health Through Heritage and Harvard School of Public Health. Available at <http://oldwayspt.org/resources/heritage-pyramids/mediterranean-pyramid/overview>. Accessed February 1, 2018.



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