



# Health Benefits of the Mediterranean Diet

Heart disease is one of the leading causes of mortality in men and women. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle and diet can help promote a healthy heart and offer other long-term benefits. The Mediterranean diet provides an ideal combination of nutrients to support cardiovascular health — encouraging the consumption of healthy fats, fiber, and antioxidants, and limiting saturated and trans fats.

## The Mediterranean diet focuses on:

- **Vegetables** – including tomatoes, zucchini, eggplant, spinach, and sweet potatoes
- **Fruits** – including apples, pomegranate, cherries, oranges, pears, and strawberries
- **Whole grains** – including bulgur wheat, barley, farro, quinoa, brown rice, and wheat bread
- **Beans** – including peas, lentils, fava beans, and chickpeas
- **Nuts and seeds** – including walnuts, pistachios, cashews, pine nuts, and almond butter
- **Healthy fats** – including extra virgin olive oil, avocados, olives, and fish
- **Herbs and spices** – including garlic, basil, dill, oregano, mint, and turmeric

The diet also includes moderate amounts of dairy, eggs, and poultry. Meals with added sugars and red meat should be limited.

This type of diet is recommended for people with heart disease or those who want to follow a healthy eating plan. It is also associated with lowering the risk of Type 2 diabetes, depression, and dementia. The Mediterranean diet has been shown to decrease cardiovascular disease, support healthy weight loss, and increase an individual's lifespan.



Sustaining heart health is a lifelong commitment. Making small changes to your diet can reduce the risk of heart disease and improve overall cardiovascular health. Always consult with a healthcare professional before starting a new eating plan.