



THE ONLY SUPPLEMENTS YOU NEED TO GET THE BODY YOU WANT.

## 5 AWESOME MEDITERRANEAN DIET MEAL PLANS



I've encountered my fair share of diets and I've even investigated a few on this site already, but one that's always fascinated me is the Mediterranean diet. Although, I hate to even call it a diet since it's really more of a lifestyle than a food regime.

When I think of the word 'diet' I almost automatically assume there are some restrictions and limitations ahead. However, with the Mediterranean diet, it never actually feels like you're missing out on anything thanks to the variety of tasty food options available.

## **WHAT IS THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET?**

Originally dating back to the 1970s, the Mediterranean diet was first introduced by an American scientist by the name of Ancel Keys and his wife, Margaret Keys, a chemist. Unfortunately, the diet didn't take off until about 20 years later in the 1990s.

When Ancel first introduced the notion of the Mediterranean diet, he suggested that by following the dietary patterns of people living in Greece, Italy, and Spain, you could improve your overall health.

According to the original theories, by implementing a diet rich in healthy fats you may even reduce your risk of health issues like cardiovascular disease.

## **MEDITERRANEAN DIET GUIDELINES**

According to the Mayo Clinic, the following guidelines are used when following the Mediterranean diet.

The idea is to:

- ✔ Consume meats and sweets on a less frequent basis than most of us are used to
- ✔ Consume moderate amounts of poultry, eggs, cheese, and yogurt
- ✔ Choose fish and seafood at least twice a week, if not more
- ✔ Include fruits, veggies, whole grains, olive oil, beans, nuts, legumes, seeds, herbs, and spices in as many of your meals as possible

In addition to those staples, you'll also find some of the following foods in the Mediterranean diet:

- ✓ Veggies such as broccoli rabe, tomatoes, cucumbers, chick peas, peppers, eggplant
- ✓ Protein sources: eggs, baked chicken, salmon, white fish, shrimp, tuna
- ✓ Whole grains such as couscous, bulgur, quinoa
- ✓ Beans, legumes, nuts, and seeds
- ✓ Fresh herbs like parsley, basil, mint, dill
- ✓ Olive oil
- ✓ Red wine in moderation (optional)

Here are some other general principles many people follow when adhering to a Mediterranean diet.

- ✓ Olive oil should be your main added fat
- ✓ Eat veggies with every meal (100 g of leafy greens, 100 g of tomatoes, and 200 g of other vegetables)
- ✓ Eat at least two legume based meals per week
- ✓ Eat at least two servings of fish per week
- ✓ Consume small portions of meat no more than once or twice a week
- ✓ Eat fresh fruit, dried fruit, or nuts as a snack or as your dessert
- ✓ Yogurt can be eaten everyday, but cheese should be limited to about 30-40 g per day
- ✓ Eat whole grain breads and cereals with meals

- ✓ Consume red wine in moderation with meals, don't drink to get drunk, and limit the amount of days you drink, adding in a few non-alcohol days during the week
- ✓ Enjoy sweets or sweet drinks on special occasions only

## **BENEFITS OF FOLLOWING A MEDITERRANEAN DIET**

One thing I really like about the Mediterranean diet is the fact that you can find a substantial amount of research supporting its health benefits.

### **Lower Prevalence of Obesity**

In one study presented in the US National Library of Medicine, researchers studied the effects of the diet on 553 elderly men and 637 elderly women (average age of 74) between the years of 2005-2007.

This group of participants lived in the Mediterranean islands in places like Greece and Cyprus and were considered to have no previous cardiovascular disease.

According to the study, these individuals were assessed on bio-clinical and dietary characteristics and given a MedDietScore that assessed how closely they followed a diet resembling the key features of the Mediterranean diet.

The result: those who scored just one unit higher on their MedDietScore, meaning they followed a Mediterranean diet more closely, saw an 88% lower likelihood of being obese.

### **Reduced Asthma Symptoms**

The next cross-sectional survey examined the effects of following the Mediterranean diet and asthma.

This time, the research was conducted on 1,125 children between the ages of 10-12. The study also investigated the differences of living in an urban Mediterranean environment versus a rural one. Therefore, children were selected from 18 schools in urban Athens and 10 schools in rural places like Illia and Viotia, Greece.

Parents and children were asked to fill out standard questionnaires that involved environmental factors and dietary habits. They were also evaluated the same way as the first study; they were given a KIDMED score that corresponded to how closely they followed a Mediterranean diet.

As to be expected, the children growing up in urban environments reported a higher chance of having asthma symptoms by 1.78 times. However, the results proved to be much more interesting.

For every 1-unit increase in the KIDMED score, a 16% lower likelihood of having asthma symptoms was discovered. And these findings showed consistency in the children growing up in both environments.

So although children in urban areas had a higher chance of having asthma symptoms, they were just as likely to see an improvement as their rural buddies thanks to their Mediterranean diet.

## Cardiovascular Benefits

The 7,447 participants in this study already had a high risk for cardiovascular disease, but they did not actually have a cardiovascular disease during the time of the study.

The individuals were randomly assigned to a Mediterranean diet that was supplemented with extra-virgin olive oil, a Mediterranean diet supplemented with nuts, and a control diet that reduced dietary fat intake.

As a result, the two groups following the Mediterranean diet supplemented with either olive oil or nuts, saw a reduction in the incidence of major cardiovascular events.

## Preventing Type-2 Diabetes

This time, researchers explored the idea that the Mediterranean diet could mediate the effects of oxidative stress and help prevent diabetes.

For this study, 1,514 men and 1,528 women living in the Athens, Greece area were studied between the years of 2001-2002.

Prior to the trial, individuals were asked to complete a questionnaire that assessed their diet and lifestyles. Once again, they were given a MedDietScore that correlated directly to how close they followed the diet. Things like oxidative stress and

inflammatory biomarkers were also recorded during the first trial and the 10 year follow up.

The results showed a 49%-62% decrease in diabetes risk in individuals who adhered to the diet on a medium to high basis, meaning they stuck to it as closely as possible. What's even more interesting is that the research noted that the participants who benefited the most from the reduction were men with a waist circumference of 94 or more, and women with a waist circumference of 80 or more.

## Reduction in Depression Symptoms

This study explored the effects of six diets, one of which was the Mediterranean, as they relate to the onset of depression symptoms. Using an all women test group whose ages ranged from 50-55 years old, the study took place in 2001 with a follow up in 2004.

The participants had to complete a food frequency survey along with a questionnaire to measure their symptoms of depression. As a result, those following a Mediterranean diet reported a "lower prevalence in depressive symptoms in 2001...and longitudinally with lower incidence of depressive symptoms in 2004".

## **MEDITERRANEAN MEAL PLANS**

Without further adieu, here are five awesome Mediterranean meal plans.

### Day 1 Meal Plan

Breakfast: Greek yogurt parfait using a Greek yogurt base, add slivered almonds, pumpkin seeds, and a sprinkle of granola. Next, drizzle a tiny bit of honey over the top.

Morning Snack: Handful of walnuts with an apple.

Lunch: Toasted pita with hummus, cut up peppers, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, a few pitted kalamata olives, and a sprinkle of feta cheese.

Afternoon snack: Two hard boiled eggs.

Dinner: Two servings of roasted lemon and dill salmon (one for dinner and one to use for lunch tomorrow).

## Day 2 Meal Plan

Breakfast: Quinoa and banana 'oatmeal' with chopped walnuts, hazelnuts, and a dash of cinnamon.

Morning Snack: One hard boiled egg.

Lunch: Greek style salad (red onions, black olives, cucumbers, tomatoes, feta, and pepperoncinis) topped with the salmon from last night.

Afternoon snack: 2nd hard boiled egg.

Dinner: Mediterranean shrimp skillet with a side of homemade tabbouleh. I'll make a big batch of the tabbouleh so I can use it for lunch the next day.

## Day 3 Meal Plan

Breakfast: Two pieces of whole wheat bread with slices of avocado, sprinkled with feta, and topped with a sunny side up egg.

Morning Snack: Greek yogurt parfait like the one in Day 1's plan.

Lunch: Homemade tabbouleh from previous night with a toasted pita.

Afternoon snack: Slices of tomato, fresh basil, some low-fat mozzarella, and some olives drizzled in olive oil.

Dinner: Lamb meatballs with a Lemon-Cumin Greek Yogurt sauce. (Again, I'll make a big batch of these so I have some for lunch the next day.)

## Day 4 Meal Plan

Breakfast: Mediterranean frittata, which I'll use for tomorrow's breakfast too.

Morning Snack: Handful of almonds and some mixed berries.

Lunch: Leftover meatballs from Day 3 with some pita.

Afternoon snack: Hummus with freshly sliced peppers and carrots.

Dinner: Fit Men Cook's Mediterranean Inspired Quinoa, which I'll use for lunch the next day too.

## Day 5 Meal Plan

Breakfast: The rest of the Mediterranean frittata.

Morning Snack: Greek yogurt with a side of fresh fruit.

Lunch: Leftover quinoa salad from the previous night.

Afternoon snack: Lemon parmesan chickpea salad.

Dinner: Tomato, olive, and thyme white fish fillets.

As you can see from these easy meal plans, following the Mediterranean diet not only offers healthy and flavorful options, but it can also save you money since most of the ingredients are relatively inexpensive and can be used for multiple meals.

Real science. Real supplements. Real results.  
Get the results you want when you shop our line of bodybuilding,  
pre-workout and weight loss stacks and supplements.

[\*\*Shop Supplements Here\*\*](#)

**YOU SHOULD BE GETTING MORE FOR YOUR SUPPLEMENT MONEY.**