

Have you heard of the Mediterranean Diet? Technically it's not a diet; it is a traditional way of eating that has been around for thousands of years. Fifty years ago, research started discovering the health benefits of this eating pattern and continues to confirm this today, as well as revealing new positive aspects.

Did you know that the Mediterranean Diet has been shown to reduce our risk of heart disease by 50% and reduce our risk of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease by 13%?



Exciting new research has shown a link between the Mediterranean Diet and reversal of fatty liver, as well as decreasing insulin resistance and so improving blood sugar control. This is great news for diabetics and for reducing the risk of developing diabetes. Studies have shown that the Mediterranean diet may also have a role in preventing or managing depression and anxiety disorders.

The Mediterranean Diet has also been highlighted through recent Blue Zones research. The Blue Zones are areas in the world where residents are living longer lives with significantly less chronic disease. The eating patterns in these areas are all slightly different but they all reflect the principles of the Mediterranean diet. Another great reason to adopt the Mediterranean diet in some form.

The main characteristics of the Mediterranean Diet are fresh plant-based ingredients, high in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties. This is a significantly higher plant intake than the traditional Western diet.

The winning nutrients of the Mediterranean Diet include Vitamin C, Vitamin E, carotenoids, flavonoids, selenium, fatty acids and phytoestrogens.

How to eat the Mediterranean way

- Extra Virgin Olive oil as main added fat
- Vegetables and salad at every meal
- Legumes twice per week
- Fish and/or seafood at least twice per week
- Reduced amounts meat and chicken
- Wholegrains and sourdough bread
- Fruit every day, 2-3 serves
- Yoghurt daily
- Include herbs, fresh or dried, in your cooking and with meals
- Raw nuts daily. Choose nuts with skin where possible eg almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts
- Reduce intake desserts and processed sugars

Contact us with your food and nutrition questions on www.actnss.org. We would love to help!