



The Mediterranean Diet

How healthy is a Mediterranean diet?

A Mediterranean diet plays a vital role in boosting your heart's health. It can greatly help reduce chances of heart attack, stroke, and other serious diseases. It combats obesity and diabetes, and can even improve your thinking and memory as you age.

The Mediterranean diet is backed by research that directly links these heart-friendly foods to their many medical benefits—including supporting a longer lifespan and preventing serious disease.

4 major ways a Mediterranean diet benefits your heart health.

1. Helps keep cholesterol levels healthy.
2. Enhances your body's ability to absorb blood sugar.
3. Cools off damaging inflammation.
4. Helps arteries stay flexible and resist plaque buildup.

What's in a Mediterranean diet?

- Olive oil as a primary fat source.
- Legumes, such as peas, beans and lentils.
- Whole grains.
- Fruits and vegetables.
- Nuts.
- Fatty fish, occasionally poultry.



Exercise *and* Vascular Health

Benefits of Regular Exercise

Engaging in regular exercise has a lot of benefits for your body and is proven to have a positive impact on vascular health! It's not just good for your veins and arteries—you entire body can benefit. It keeps your thinking, learning, and judgment skills sharp.

Exercising is even more beneficial when you also eat heart-friendly foods, maintain a healthy weight, and avoid smoking. Starting good habits today can keep issues at bay.

Regular exercise helps:

- ✓ **Maintain a healthy weight**
- ✓ **Reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease**
- ✓ **Improves learning**
- ✓ **Sharpens decision making**
- ✓ **Releases endocannabinoids, improving mood**
- ✓ **Improves sleep**

What do I need to do?

Regular activity can be moderate to vigorous intensity aerobics combined with strength training. Exercise 3-5 times a week with a goal of 75-150 minutes/week.

- **Moderate intensity aerobics** the heart rate and cause sweating. These can include yard work, walking briskly, casual biking, ballroom dancing and more.
- **Vigorous-intensity aerobics** increase the heart rate. They also cause sweating and heavy breathing that limits talking. These can include jogging, hiking, fast cycling, jump rope, and much more.
- **Muscle-strengthening activities** can be things such as weight lifting, yoga, sit-ups, push-ups and so forth. These activities increase balance, strength, and prevent osteoporosis.

How can I exercise regularly?

- Select enjoyable activities
- Work out with a friend
- Encourage family to join in
- Track progress with a daily journal

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