

# The Mediterranean Eating Style



Following a Mediterranean style of eating can offer health benefits for many people. This eating style has been shown to help with weight loss and lower the risk of chronic conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, certain cancers, heart disease, and kidney disease. By making small changes in your food choices, you can make a big difference in your health. Always check with your doctor about which foods are right for you to eat.

## What is the MEDITERRANEAN STYLE OF EATING?

The Mediterranean style of eating is a low-fat style of eating that focuses on eating mostly plant-based foods, such as vegetables, fruit, whole grains, nuts, seeds, beans, lentils, and peas. Olive oil is the main source of healthy fat, but other sources are avocados, nuts, olives, and seeds. The main sources of protein are beans, peas, lentils, nuts, and seafood.

People following this eating style should focus on eating healthy, plant-based foods, staying active, and drinking enough water daily. Sweets and animal products should be eaten less often. The picture below shows how to create a plate with healthy foods. Reach out to Healthmap Solutions if you would like to speak with a registered dietitian to learn more.

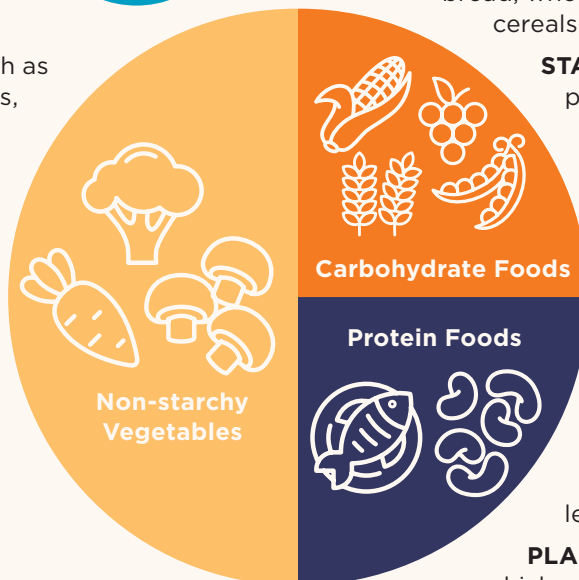
### Non-starchy VEGETABLES

Fill **half your plate** with non-starchy vegetables such as okra, lettuce, carrots, onions, spinach, peppers, broccoli, zucchini, cabbage, cauliflower, cucumbers, and mushrooms.



### Other FOODS

**Other foods that can be eaten while following a Mediterranean eating style:** low-fat cheese and yogurt, herbs and spices, olives and olive oil, avocados



## CARBOHYDRATES

Fill **one quarter of your plate** with carbohydrates.

**WHOLE GRAINS:** brown rice, oatmeal, quinoa, barley, farro, whole grain pasta, whole grain bread, whole grain tortillas, whole grain cereals

### STARCHY VEGETABLES:

potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, peas, winter squash

**FRUITS:** apples, cherries, bananas, berries, pineapple, melon, grapes, pears, peaches

## PROTEINS

Fill **one quarter of your plate** with protein.

**ANIMAL SOURCES:** poultry, fish, eggs, wild game, or other lean/unprocessed meats

**PLANT SOURCES:** beans, chickpeas, nuts and nut butters, seeds, lentils, tofu, soy products

*Image adapted from the American Diabetes Association's "Diabetes Plate Method"*



## TIPS TO GET STARTED

**EAT MORE WHOLE FOODS**, such as 100% whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and beans.

**EAT FEWER PROCESSED FOODS**, such as deli meats, chips, bacon, and sugary breakfast cereals.

**CREATE A COLORFUL PLATE.** Eating a variety of colorful foods can improve your health.



- **Reds:** apples, raspberries, pomegranates, tomatoes, red bell peppers, red-skinned potatoes
- **Oranges:** citrus fruits, cantaloupe, apricots, mangoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, acorn or butternut squash
- **Yellows:** bananas, yellow beets, summer or spaghetti squash, yellow cherry tomatoes, yellow bell peppers
- **Greens:** green apples, pears, cucumbers, peas, green beans, avocado, spinach, collard greens, kale, broccoli
- **Blues:** blueberries, blackberries, blackcurrants, blue corn
- **Purples:** Concord grapes, raisins, elderberries, cherries, plums, purple carrots, purple potatoes, beets, purple cabbage
- **White:** onions, cauliflower, potatoes, parsnips, garlic
- **Brown:** chickpeas, lentils, beans, mushrooms, dates

## MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES AND SWAPS

- Use oils that are liquid at room temperature in place of butter and margarine.
- Replace mayonnaise with avocado or low-fat, unsweetened plain yogurt.
- Use herbs and spices in place of salt.
- Replace sweetened beverages with water or low-calorie choices.
- Choose healthy snacks such as vegetables with hummus or a piece of fruit with a handful of nuts or seeds.
- Choose lean proteins such as legumes, beans, chicken, turkey, seafood, and fish more often than red meat, pork, and processed meats.
- Choose low-fat dairy items instead of whole-fat dairy products.
- Eat fruit for dessert.

**In addition to changing what foods you eat, focus on making lifestyle choices that will help your physical and emotional health.** Get your family and friends together for activities such as walking, grocery shopping, food preparation, gardening, meditation, and volunteering in the community. Limit time watching television, scrolling on the phone, and using other electronics.



# PLAN YOUR MEALS AND SNACKS

Use the lists below for some ideas for healthy meals and snacks.

## BREAKFAST

- Oatmeal with blueberries and walnuts
- Veggie and egg or egg-white omelet
- Whole grain toast with peanut butter and banana
- Nonfat or lowfat yogurt with granola

## LUNCH

- Hummus with whole wheat pita and cucumber slices
- Grilled fish tacos with lettuce, avocado, and pico de gallo
- Salad with black beans, corn, tomatoes, and olive oil vinegar dressing
- Whole wheat bread sandwich with roasted turkey, tomato, lettuce, and mustard

## DINNER

- Vegetable stir fry with brown rice
- Shrimp with whole wheat pasta and vegetables
- Roasted vegetables and tofu
- Grilled chicken with red-skinned potatoes and green beans

## SNACKS

- Hardboiled eggs
- Unsalted nuts with fruit
- Hummus and vegetables
- Homemade tortillas and vegetables
- Unsalted popcorn
- Rice cakes with peanut butter



Talk to your doctor if you think the Mediterranean style of eating might be right for you. If you have questions or would like to learn more, Healthmap Solutions can refer you to a registered dietitian.

Healthmap Solutions is here to help you manage your health. To learn more, call Healthmap at **1-800-481-0474** or visit **[patients.healthmapsolutions.com](https://patients.healthmapsolutions.com)**.

**REFERENCE:** Pérez-Torres A, Caverni-Muñoz A, Garcia EG. Mediterranean Diet and Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD): A Practical Approach. *Nutrients*, 2023 Jan; 15(1): 97.