

THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET

WHY THIS DIET? Because of the PREDIMED study, quite possibly the most elegant dietary study ever (N Engl J Med 2013;368:1279-90). The subjects were people at high risk for coronary events and stroke, but yet without clinical signs or symptoms: the Mediterranean diet reduced the risk of a new cardiovascular-event over 5 years by 30%—even though 40% of the patients were already on statins!¹ This result is profound, which is why the study was terminated prematurely. AND, ADD THESE BONUSSES!!!

1. Modest protection against nonalcoholic hepatic steatosis.²
2. Possible delay in cognitive decline with aging (speculative).³
3. Probable reduction in risk of diabetes, breast cancer,⁴ and GI cancers.⁵
4. Better mood.⁶

WHAT IS THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET? Answer: think OFF + LAW + NSWV

O = olive oil (extra virgin)	¼ C daily (total)—less is OK if you do nuts
F = fresh fruits	3 servings daily
F = fish ⁷	≥ 3 servings/wk (at least one a fatty fish, e.g., salmon, trout)
L = legumes (beans, mainly)	≥ 3 servings/wk
A = (<i>ad lib</i>) nuts, eggs, low-fat cheese, chocolate (dark), whole-grain foods, seafood, quinoa	
W = white meat (poultry or rabbit)	limit red & processed meats to ≤ once/wk
N = tree nuts & peanuts	≥ 3 servings/wk ⁸ —daily if you do little olive oil
S = sofrito ⁹	≥ 2 servings/wk
V = vegetables	2 servings daily
W = wine (optional)	if you drink @ meals, a glass daily; none if you don't ¹⁰

¹ Estruch R, Ros E, Salas-Salvadó J, et al. N Engl J Med 2013; 368:1279-1290.

² Vos M B. Curr Opin Lipidol 2014; 25: 61-66.

³ Caracciolo B, Xu W, Collins S, et al. Mech Ageing Dev 2013; December (Epub ahead of print).

⁴ Albuquerque R C, Baltar V T, Marchioni D M. Nutr Rev 2014; 72: 1-17.

⁵ Grosso G, Buscemi S, Galvano F, et al. BMC Surg 2013; 13 (Suppl 2) S14.

⁶ Ford P A, Jaceldo-Siegl K, Lee J W, et al. J Psychosom Res 2013; 74: 142-148.

⁷ In another handout we'll get into what fishes are best, safest, and most eco-friendly to eat.

⁸ A serving = 30 g (1 oz) ≈ 1/3 C

⁹ Sofrito is tomato-sauce, tomatoes sautéed slowly w/ garlic, olive oil, and onion; herbs often added: see RECIPES handout.

¹⁰ The study, carried out in Spain, recommended ≥ 7 glasses/wk, which might invite overconsumption by N American standards.