



EATING 101 RU DINING HEALTHY?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE RU HEALTHY DINING TEAM
A Joint Program Between Rutgers Dining Services and The New Jersey Institute for Food, Nutrition, and Health

Mediterranean Style

You may have heard of vegetarian and pescatarian diets, but what about their lesser-known cousin, the Mediterranean diet? Many people think that the Mediterranean diet is a specific dietary plan, but it is actually a *style* of eating and living that originates from countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea such as Greece, Italy, and Spain. This lifestyle approach also involves daily physical activity and has been consistently linked with positive health benefits. Read below to find out how you can experience the positive health benefits from the Mediterranean lifestyle whether you are at Rutgers or at home.

Fruits, Vegetables, and Whole Grains

The Mediterranean diet is centered around fruits, vegetables and whole grains. These foods can replace most, if not all, highly processed foods (pre-packaged food items with added ingredients) in your diet.

How-To: Create a flavor-packed bowl by starting with a base of whole grains and adding your favorite veggies and plant-based or lean proteins. Top it all off with a yummy sauce or dressing.



Healthy Fats

Remember, not all fats are created equal. Healthy fats (e.g. mono and polyunsaturated fats) can be found in nuts, seeds, and olive oil. These sources of fats are Mediterranean staples that provide essential nutrients.

How-To: Replace creamy dressings or condiments with olive oil-based alternatives. Try adding nuts and seeds to your salad for a crunch in place of croutons.



Protein Portions

The Mediterranean diet emphasizes fish as a main protein source, along with plant-based protein. Other meats are not omitted completely but are enjoyed in controlled portions a few times a week.

How-To: Salmon, tuna, and trout are all excellent options that include omega-3 fats. To boost your plant-based protein intake, try beans, lentils, or hummus.

Water, Water, Water!

By choosing to drink water with your next meal, you are already practicing a key component of the Mediterranean diet. A refreshing glass of water helps keep you hydrated and is free of added sugar.

How to: Mix things up by choosing sparkling water or adding a lemon slice for some flavor.



Sea all the Benefits of this Healthy Lifestyle?

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References: Casas, Rosa, et al. "Long-Term Immunomodulatory Effects of a Mediterranean Diet in Adults at High Risk of Cardiovascular Disease in the PREvención Con Dieta MEDiterránea (PREDIMED) Randomized Controlled Trial." *The Journal of Nutrition*, vol. 146, no. 9, 2016, pp. 1684–1693., doi:10.3945/jn.115.229476. Accessed on September 18, 2020.

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