



Competitive Edge
PHYSIOTHERAPY & SPORTS CONDITIONING

**MAY
2021**

HEART HEALTHY EATING FOR CARDIAC PATIENTS

If you had a cardiac event or procedure, eating a heart-healthy diet can help you recover more quickly. This goes the same for preventing heart disease. There are several diets which may have a protective effect on your heart and health. Read on to learn more about how the DASH diet and Mediterranean diet may work for you.

THE DASH DIET

The **DASH diet** stands for Dietary Approaches to Stopping Hypertension and is based on clinical studies. This diet focuses on reducing blood pressure through changes in your diet. Controlling blood pressure is important because high blood pressure causes the heart to work harder to pump nutrient and oxygen-rich blood throughout the body, which can create scarred and stiffened arteries. When the arteries stiffen, the heart has to work even harder causing the heart muscle to become weaker.



DASH FOOD GROUPS

Daily servings and examples

Vegetables: 4-5 servings

250 mL (1 cup) raw leafy vegetables
125 mL (½ cup) cooked vegetables

Fruit: 4-5 servings

1 medium piece of fruit
63 mL (¼ cup) dried fruit
125 mL (½ cup) fresh, frozen or canned fruit

Grains (mainly whole grains): 7-8 servings

1 slice bread
250 mL (1 cup) ready to eat cereal
125 mL (½ cup) cooked rice, pasta or cereal

Low Fat or No-Fat Dairy Foods: 2-3 servings

250 mL (1 cup) milk or yogurt
50 g (1½ oz) cheese

Lean meats, poultry and fish: 2 servings or less

3 ounces cooked lean meats, skinless poultry, or fish

Nuts, seeds and dry beans: 4-5 servings per week

1/3 cup (1.5 oz.) nuts
30 mL (2 tbsp) peanut butter
2 tbsp (1/2 oz.) seeds
1/2 cup cooked dry beans or peas

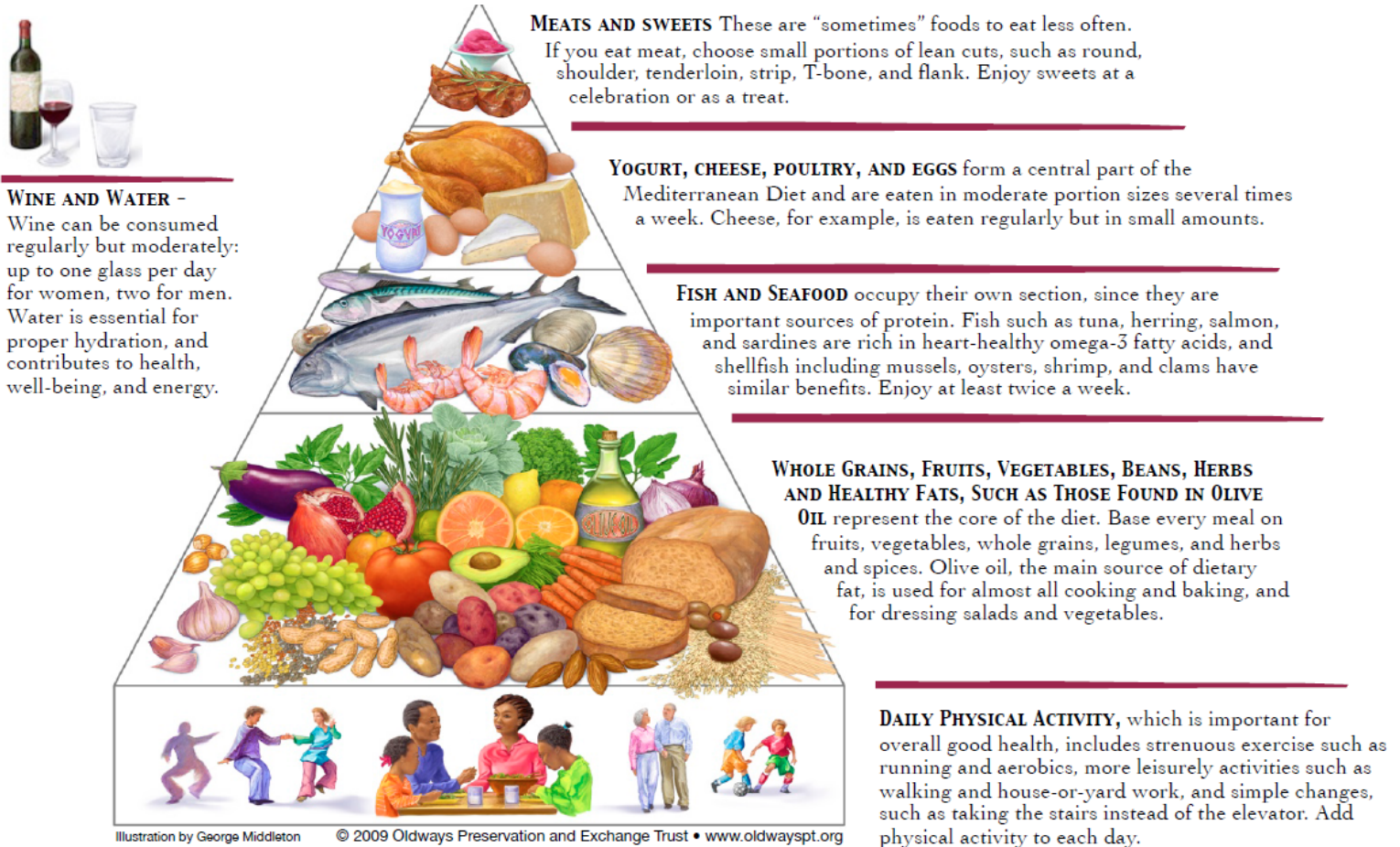
Fats and oils: 2-3 servings

5 mL (1 tsp) soft margarine or vegetable oil
15mL (1 tbsp) low-fat mayonnaise
30 mL (2 tbsp) light salad dressing

Salt: 2,300 mg (~1 tsp/5 mL table salt)

MEDITERRANEAN DIET

Like the DASH diet, the **Mediterranean diet** emphasizes vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans and legumes; includes low-fat or fat-free dairy products, fish, poultry, non-tropical vegetable oils and nuts; and limits added sugars, sugary beverages, sodium, highly processed foods, refined carbohydrates, saturated fats, and fatty or processed meats. The main difference between the two diets is that the Mediterranean diet is rich in virgin olive oil which may help the body remove excess cholesterol from arteries and keep blood vessels open. The “Mediterranean diet” is a generic term based on the traditional eating habits in the countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. There’s not one standard Mediterranean diet but it can be depicted in a pyramid:



SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Plant-based, vegetarian or vegan diet can also be a heart healthy way to eat. The main thing to focus on for other diets is the overall quality of your diet, rather than single nutrients or foods. Include more nutrient-dense foods such as vegetables, fruits, legumes and lean proteins and limit foods with lots of calories but little nutritional value.

Older people: Be careful to choose foods rich in nutrients to meet nutritional needs without too many calories.

Children: 2+ years can follow these recommendations and maintain normal growth while lowering their risk of heart disease in the future.

People with kidney disease: You may need to limit some nutrients including protein and sodium.

HOW TO GET STARTED:

- **Follow a healthy meal pattern**
 - Eat regular meals throughout the day
 - Eat your first meal within 1-2 hours of waking up
 - Cook at home more often
- **Eat more vegetables and have some fruit**
 - At lunch and dinner, fill 1/2 plate with vegetables
 - Choose a variety of coloured fresh/frozen/raw/cooked vegetables
 - Choose berries or fruit instead of juice
- **Choose whole grains**
 - Choose whole grains/sprouted grain breads, wholegrain pastas and cereals, oatmeal, barley, quinoa, brown or wild rice
 - Limit foods made with white flour or added sugar
 - Fill 1/4 plate with whole grains
- **Eat a plant-based protein each day**
 - Add legumes like split peas, lentils, chickpeas, black beans or kidney beans to soups, salads, casseroles, baked goods, use them as a dip or sandwich spread.
 - Add unsalted nuts and seeds to breakfast cereals and salads, or just have them as a snack
 - Substitute meat for tofu
- **Eat healthy fats**
 - Eat more avocado, unsalted nuts and seeds, nut butters
 - Choose a variety of oils like olive, avocado, canola, grapeseed, corn, etc.
 - Include 2-3 tbsp. (30-45 mL) of healthy fat each day
 - Choose omega-3 fats like salmon, sardines, mackerel, trout, at least 2 times a week
 - Limit saturated fats from fatty meats, butter, high fat dairy, and tropical oils like coconut and palm oil
 - Avoid processed foods like deep-fried foods, packaged snack foods, and commercial baked goods
- **Choose low fat dairy products/milk alternatives**
 - Choose milk and yogurt with 2% milk fat (M.F.) or less
 - Choose lower fat cheese when possible or enjoy smaller portions of regular cheese
 - Choose unsweetened milk alternatives fortified with calcium and vitamin D
- **Choose lean meats**
 - Avoid processed meats like bacon, ham, sausages, and deli meat
 - Trim any visible fat and remove skin from chicken, turkey or other poultry
 - Fill 1/4 plate with meat
- **Limit salt/sodium**
 - Limit take-out/restaurant foods
 - Avoid high sodium/salt packaged and canned foods
 - Cook with less salt, remove salt at the table, and try salt-free seasonings (herbs, spices, lemon, vinegars)
- **Limit sugar**
 - Replace pop/juice/sweetened drinks with water
 - Avoid foods with added sugar like honey, molasses, brown sugar, cane sugar, fruit juice concentrate, agave, high fructose corn syrup, etc.
- **Limit alcohol**
 - For men: limit alcohol to 2 drinks per day or less
 - For women: limit alcohol to 1 drink per day or less



RESOURCES

heartandstroke.ca

canada.ca/foodguide

unlockfood.ca/recipes



MEDITERRANEAN BULGUR SALAD

PREP TIME

Prep 10 m | Cook 15 m

Makes 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup bulgur
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 can (15 oz.) chickpeas, drained & rinsed
- 1 cup raw spinach leaves
- 2 cups chopped vegetables: bell peppers, red onion, cherry tomatoes, zucchini, or mushrooms
- 1/2 cup feta cheese
- 1/4 cup hummus
- 2 tbsp lemon juice

PROCEDURE

- 1 In a medium stockpot, combine bulgur, water, cumin, and salt. Bring to a boil.
- 2 Reduce heat to a simmer and cover with a lid for 10-12 minutes.
- 3 Stir in the chickpeas and heat on low for about 3-5 minutes.
- 4 Remove from heat and stir in spinach until wilted. Add remaining vegetables and stir in feta, hummus, and lemon juice.
- 5 Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to 4 days.

TIPS

This salad is great for meal prepping and can be eaten cold or hot. Bulgur is a whole grain that meets 30% of daily dietary fibre recommendations and provides iron, magnesium and manganese. Combine bulgur with vegetables like peppers, tomatoes and spinach that have vitamin C to increase the absorption of iron. Recipe adapted from foodandhealth.com

NUTRITION INFORMATION

Per 1 serving

Calories 200

Fat 6 g

Saturated 2.3 g

Unsaturated 0.7 g

Sodium 350 mg

Potassium 315 mg

Carbohydrates 38 g

Fiber 6.7 g

Sugars 2.8 g

Protein 10 g

Vitamin A 43.7%

Calcium 8.7%

Vitamin C 120%

Iron 15%