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Mediterranean Diet: Amazing Benefits and More

What is the Mediterranean Diet?

The Mediterranean Diet is a dietary pattern influenced by the eating habits from people living in Greece and southern Italy. Although the name, Mediterranean Diet, may make it seem like it is a short-term diet plan, it actually describes a healthy, life-long dietary pattern. The Mediterranean Diet is heart-healthy and emphasizes whole fresh fruits, plenty of vegetables, healthy oils, and nuts.

Benefits of the Mediterranean Diet

- Improve cholesterol
- Controls blood sugar
- Reduces risk for developing heart disease
- Reduces risk of death from heart disease
- Reduces incidence of Parkinson's disease
- Reduces incidence of Alzheimer's disease
- Lowers risk for cancer

Current research findings

Recent studies found that middle age women who followed the Mediterranean Diet for 15 years lived longer than middle aged women who did not. In addition, the women who followed the Mediterranean Diet were also more likely to age without having major chronic diseases, memory changes, physical impairments, and mental health issues.



Salmon is a great source of omega-3 fatty acids which are important in the Mediterranean Diet.

How to follow the Mediterranean Diet

Food Groups	Recommended Servings per day
Whole Grains	4-6
Non-Starchy Vegetables	4-8
Fruit	2-4
Legumes and Nuts	1-3
Low-fat dairy	1-3
Fish or Shellfish	2-3 per week
Poultry, if desired	1-3
Healthy Fat - Olive, Canola, Avocado	4-6
Alcohol	1 serving or less for women and 2 servings or less for men

Seafood Couscous

Yield: 2 servings

Time: 35 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 medium sweet onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon fennel seed
- 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
- 1 cup no-salt-added diced tomatoes, with juice
- 1/4 teaspoon Mrs. DASH table blend
- 1/4 cup low sodium chicken broth
- 4 ounces bay scallops, tough muscle removed
- 4 ounces small shrimp, (41-50 per pound), peeled and deveined
- 1/2 cup whole-wheat couscous, uncooked
- Pinch of Hungarian paprika

Preparation

1. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion; cook, stirring constantly, for 3 minutes. Add thyme, garlic, pepper and fennel seed; cook for 20 seconds.
2. Stir in tomatoes, Mrs. DASH and broth. Bring to a simmer. Cover, reduce heat and cook for 2 minutes.
3. Increase heat to medium, stir in scallops and cook, stirring occasionally for 2 minutes. Add shrimp and cook, stirring occasionally for 2 minutes more. Stir in couscous. Cover, remove from heat and let stand for 5 minutes. Fluff and sprinkle with paprika.



Nutrition Analysis:

Calories: 354 **Carbohydrate: 50**
Protein: 26 g. **Fat: 6 g.**
Saturated Fat: 1 g. **Cholesterol: 90 mg.**
Sodium: 474 mg **Dietary fiber: 9 g.**

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