

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

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Explore the Mediterranean Diet for healthy living

Bring a taste of the world into your diet this winter. The Mediterranean Diet is a style of eating that includes foods often eaten in the countries around the Mediterranean Sea. Some of these countries are Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Morocco.

This style of eating includes lots of vegetables, fruits, beans, peas, lentils, fish, nuts and olive oil – all foods that we can get in Alberta.

Here are a few tips on how to incorporate the Mediterranean Diet into your lifestyle:

- Eat five or more servings of vegetables each day, and three or more servings of fruit each day.
 - Of that, ensure two servings are raw or salad.
 - Choose brightly coloured vegetables. Some examples are beets, carrots, eggplant, kale, okra, spinach, squash and tomatoes.
 - Choose brightly coloured fruits. Some examples are oranges, strawberries, melons and peaches.
 - Prepare vegetables with small amounts of olive oil, and no salt or sugar.
 - Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables and fruit are good choices. Frozen and canned are often as nutritious as fresh.
- Eat five-six servings of whole grains each day.
- Use herbs, spices, garlic and onion as flavourings instead of salt.
- Enjoy fish or seafood instead of meat three or more times a week.
 - Eat at least one serving of fish high in omega-3 fats: salmon, sardines, herring, mackerel and trout.
 - Choose fresh, frozen or no added salt canned fish or seafood.
- Choose lean poultry, meat and eggs
 - Choose poultry such as chicken and turkey more often than red meat (Beef, pork, lamb or goat).

- Eggs and egg whites have protein and can be used in place of red meat at meals.

Limit these foods:

- High-fat milk products such as cream or butter.
- Processed meat such as sausage, bacon, ham, salami, deli meats and pate. These are higher in saturated fat and salt.
- Higher fat fresh meats such as marbled steak, roast, ribs, pork belly, duck or chicken wings.
- Foods with added sugar (consume less than two times per week), such as pop, iced tea, fruit drinks sweetened with sugar, baked goods, puddings and custard.
- High-fat snack foods such as French fries, potato chips, buttered popcorn and cheese puffs.