

## **Mediterranean Diet Nutrition Plan**

The Mediterranean diet is beneficial for:

- Heart health: Reduces risk of cardiovascular diseases
- Weight management: Promotes healthy weight loss and maintenance
- Brain function: May improve cognitive function and reduce risk of neurodegenerative diseases
- Diabetes management: Helps control blood sugar levels
- Cancer prevention: May reduce risk of certain types of cancer
- Longevity: Associated with increased lifespan

This diet is ideal for:

- Individuals looking to improve overall health
- Those at risk of heart disease or stroke
- People wanting to lose weight sustainably
- Anyone interested in adopting a balanced, flavorful eating pattern

## **Meal Plan**

### **Mediterranean Breakfast Options:**

a) Greek yogurt parfait:

- 1 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup mixed berries
- 1 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp chopped walnuts
- Sprinkle of cinnamon

b) Whole grain toast with avocado and egg:

- 2 slices whole grain bread, toasted
- 1/2 avocado, mashed
- 2 poached eggs
- Drizzle of extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

c) Mediterranean breakfast bowl:

- 1/2 cup cooked quinoa
- 1/4 cup chickpeas
- 1/4 cup diced cucumber
- 1/4 cup diced tomatoes
- 2 tbsp crumbled feta cheese
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh herbs (parsley, mint)
- Drizzle of lemon juice and olive oil

## **Mediterranean Lunch Options:**

### **a) Greek salad with grilled chicken:**

- 2 cups mixed greens
- 3 oz grilled chicken breast
- 1/4 cup diced cucumber
- 1/4 cup diced tomatoes
- 1/4 cup sliced red onion
- 10 kalamata olives
- 2 tbsp crumbled feta cheese
- Dressing: 1 tbsp olive oil, 1 tsp red wine vinegar, oregano

### **b) Mediterranean tuna wrap:**

- 1 whole wheat tortilla
- 3 oz canned tuna in olive oil, drained
- 1/4 cup diced bell peppers
- 2 tbsp hummus
- Handful of spinach leaves
- 1 tbsp chopped sun-dried tomatoes

### **c) Lentil and vegetable soup:**

- 1 cup cooked lentils
- 1 cup mixed vegetables (carrots, celery, onions, tomatoes)
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Herbs: bay leaf, thyme, rosemary
- Serve with a slice of whole grain bread

## **Mediterranean Dinner Options:**

### **a) Baked salmon with roasted vegetables:**

- 4 oz baked salmon fillet
- 1 cup mixed roasted vegetables (zucchini, bell peppers, eggplant)
- 1/2 cup quinoa
- 1 tbsp olive oil for roasting
- Lemon wedge and fresh dill for garnish

### **b) Mediterranean stuffed peppers:**

- 1 large bell pepper, halved and stuffed with:
  - 1/2 cup cooked brown rice
  - 1/4 cup cooked lentils
  - 2 tbsp chopped tomatoes
  - 1 tbsp chopped olives
  - 1 tbsp crumbled feta cheese
- Bake until pepper is tender
- Serve with a side salad of mixed greens and olive oil dressing

### **c) Grilled vegetable and chicken skewers:**

- 3 oz chicken breast, cubed
- 1 cup mixed vegetables for skewers (cherry tomatoes, zucchini, red onion)
- 1 tbsp olive oil for brushing
- Mediterranean spice mix (oregano, basil, garlic powder)
- Serve with 1/2 cup tzatziki sauce and 1/2 cup tabbouleh

### **Mediterranean Snack Options:**

a) Fresh fruit with nuts:

- 1 medium apple or pear
- 10 almonds or walnuts

b) Vegetable sticks with hummus:

- 1 cup mixed vegetable sticks (carrots, cucumbers, bell peppers)
- 2 tbsp homemade or store-bought hummus

c) Greek yogurt with honey:

- 1/2 cup Greek yogurt
- 1 tsp honey
- Sprinkle of cinnamon

d) Olive tapenade with whole grain crackers:

- 2 tbsp olive tapenade
- 5-6 whole grain crackers

e) Handful of mixed olives

**Mediterranean General Guidelines:**

- Use extra virgin olive oil as the primary source of added fat
- Consume fish and poultry at least twice a week
- Limit red meat to no more than a few times per month
- Enjoy fresh fruits as dessert instead of sugary sweets
- Drink red wine in moderation (optional, and only for those who already drink alcohol)
- Stay hydrated with water as the primary beverage

**Mediterranean Weekly Meal Prep Tips:**

- Prepare large batches of whole grains and legumes
- Chop vegetables in advance for quick salads and cooking
- Make homemade hummus and tzatziki sauce for the week
- Marinate chicken or fish for easy grilling throughout the week

Adjusting Portion Sizes: Adjust portion sizes based on individual caloric needs, activity level, and weight management goals. Consult with a registered dietitian for personalized advice.