

DASH diet to lose weight and improve

The varied DASH diet loses weight and is a specific drug for the treatment of high blood pressure and the prevention of diabetes. See how it is drafted.

Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH), found in U.S. studies, is effective in treating high blood pressure and also appears to provide protection against type 2 diabetes.

The triumph of the DASH diet began as early as twenty years ago in a study in the United States that found that a diet high in vegetables and low in salt can lower blood pressure almost as effectively as antihypertensive drugs. The study included people with high blood pressure or normal blood pressure. Diet lowered blood pressure in both groups. In the group of people with high blood pressure, the decrease was about 10 millimeters of mercury, which means that the effect corresponds to the effect of one antihypertensive medicine.

Behind the drop in blood pressure is the interaction of food.

Discard empty calories

The idea is to eat as nutritious food as possible and discard the empty calories that accrue, especially from sweet drinks, coarse and fatty pastries. Therefore, DASH meals are rich in vegetables, berries and fruits. In addition, whole grains and low-fat or non-fat dairy products are selected.

Fish is eaten heavily, lean poultry to some extent, and red meat little. The quality of the fat is made as soft as possible and sweets and sugary drinks are reduced. In addition, the diet includes nuts, seeds and legumes.

Less salt

The amount of salt is reduced, but the food is rich in potassium, magnesium and calcium. Potassium comes from potatoes, soy products, almonds, nuts, seeds, beans, tomatoes, apples, figs and whole grains. Calcium is found in dairy products, cabbage and soy products. Magnesium is found in seeds, beans and legumes, whole grains and nuts.

The effectiveness of the DASH diet has also been studied in the prevention of type 2 diabetes. During the five-year follow-up, those who followed the strictest diet had a lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Diet seems to lower bad LDL cholesterol and affect insulin sensitivity, which is how well the body's cells respond to insulin in the bloodstream. High blood pressure is also a risk factor for diabetes.

The link between type 2 diabetes and lifestyle was found in a Finnish study a few years ago. With nutrition and exercise guidance, diabetes could be prevented even in those who already had impaired sugar tolerance, ie an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Test your eating and make a small food renovation

1. Six handfuls of vegetables

The backbone of the DASH diet is made up of vegetables, fruits and berries. The old rule of thumb, half a pound a day, or six handfuls, applies. Fruits and vegetables have long been known to prevent cardiovascular disease and many other diseases.

According to a recent international study, a two-month course of fruit and vegetables significantly improved the endothelial function of the participants' blood vessels. The beneficial effect was already observed with the addition of a single dose, but the change was greatest in those who ate the most fruits and vegetables.

Vegetables 10 servings a day

Vegetables, vegetables 6 servings

1 serving = 2 dl lettuce, grated or 1-1.5 dl boiled vegetables or 1 large tomato or 1 large carrot

+ Berries and fruits 4 servings

1 serving = 1 apple or orange or banana, 2 pieces of kiwis or mandarins or plums or 15 pieces of grapes or 2-3 dl of fresh berries or 2 dl of whole juice

2. Grain whole grains

The second most selected are cereal products, mainly bread and porridge, and also as whole grain products. The DASH diet is rich in fiber, which is obtained from whole grains, such as oats and rye. Fiber increases the intestinal mass, which slows down the digestion and absorption of food. It, in turn, equalizes blood sugar levels and reduces insulin secretion.

According to a recent study, whole grains also equalize blood pressure. For those who consume a lot of whole grains, their blood pressure rises harmfully about one-fifth less often than those who eat whole grains. This may be due, among other things, to the fact that whole grains produce potassium, the deficiency of which raises blood pressure.

Cereals and cereal products 8 servings per day

1 serving = 1 slice of bread or 1 dl of porridge or 1 dl of boiled rice or 1 dl of boiled pasta or 1 small bun

3. Low-fat dairy products

Calcium, potassium and protein in dairy products have a good effect on blood pressure. Of the liquid dairy products, milk, buttermilk, chilli and yogurt, non-fat options are preferred. Low-fat or skim milk products are recommended to be taken four doses a day.

Milk and dairy products 4 servings per day

1 serving = a glass of milk or buttermilk or 2 dl of non-fat yoghurt, a non-fat file or milk curd or 2-3 dl of cottage cheese or 2-3 slices of low-fat cheese (<17%)

4. Lots of fish, little meat

The fish should be eaten three times a week and should not be fatty. Fatty fish is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, the intake of which helps to control blood pressure. Fatty fish include salmon, rainbow trout, herring, mackerel, sardines and vendace.

Meat, fish, egg 2 servings a day

1 serving = 85 g lean meat, fish or poultry or 5 dumplings or 1 dl meat sauce or 5 slices of cooked ham or 1 egg

5. Soft fats

Dietary fats are used the least per day and soft ones are selected, ie bottled margarine or oil for cooking and soft margarine on top of bread.

Dietary fats 3-4 servings per day

1 serving = 1 teaspoon 60-70% fat margarine or 2 teaspoons 40% fat margarine or light spread or 1 tablespoon oil-based salad dressing or 2 tablespoons light salad dressing.

In addition to the four servings, good fats are also needed, for example, from fish, cooking oils and nuts and legumes.

A good rule of thumb in fat is: 1 teaspoon of 60-70% margarine for each bread, ohja – 1 tablespoon of oil-based salad dressing for salad serving and cooking oil, running margarine or box margarine containing 60-70% fat.

6. A couple of a handful of nuts a week

Your DASH diet can be completed by eating a handful of nuts a few times a week. Nuts contain good fat and omega-3 fatty acids, potassium and magnesium, among other things.

Nuts, seeds, legumes 4 to 5 servings per week

1 serving = 50 g nuts or 2 teaspoons seeds or 1.25 dl beans, lentils

7. Apply a teaspoon of salt

The DASH diet should only contain 4.3 grams of salt. The target is tough, as it has already been difficult to achieve the Nordic target of 5 grams per day.

One teaspoon of table salt contains five grams of table salt, or sodium chloride. If the amount of salt is expressed as sodium, you get the amount of table salt by multiplying the amount of sodium by 2.5. $\text{Na} \times 2.5 = \text{NaCl}$

Most of the salt comes from industrial foods. Of the individual foods, bread is the largest source of salt.

Very few low-salt breads are available, but they can also be found when you spend time on the bread shelf to study the product descriptions. If there is more than one percent salt in the bread, leave it on the shelf. The best way to avoid salt is to bake your own bread, avoid using spice mixes and sauces that contain salt, and choose the least salty from cold cuts and cheeses.

8. Delicacies up to five times a week

The use of sugar should also be reduced. The easiest way is to reduce the use of sweet pastries, candies and sugary drinks. The recommended maximum intake for added sugar is 10 percent of your daily energy. For a daily dose of 2,000 kilocalories, that means 50 grams of pure sugar.

Sweet up to 5 servings per week

1 serving = 1 tablespoon sugar or 1 tablespoon marmalade or 2.5 dl sugar juice or 3 caramels or a small stick of ice cream