



THE BEST OF ALL FUNCTIONAL FOODS

Presented By
Mediterranean Harvest For Life®
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MEDITERRANEAN HARVEST FOR LIFE® -- THE BEST OF ALL FUNCTIONAL FOODS
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Functional Foods & Fresh Ideas. It's All In The MHFL Dietary Regimen	3
A "Divine Mix"	3
Mediterranean Harvest For Life -- Your Cradle-To- (Keep Out-Of-The) Grave Solution	5
MHFL Adds Unique Value To The Mediterranean Style Of Eating	5
The Basics Of Mediterranean Style Eating	7
Mediterranean Harvest For Life = The Best Of All Functional Foods	8
Olive Oil	8
Antioxidants -- Such As Vitamins C And E	9
Apples	10
Bananas	10
Beans	10
Blueberries	10
Brightly Colored Fruits & Vegetables	10
Broccoli	11
Buckwheat	11
Calcium	11
Cantaloupe	12
Carrots	12
Chili Peppers	12
Coffee	12
Concord Grape Juice Is Even Better Than Wine	12
Cruciferous Vegetables	12
Dark Chocolate	13
Fatty Fish With Omega 3	13
Fiber	13
Flaxseed	13
Garlic	14
Grapefruit	14
Lean Meats & Poultry	14
Low Fat Dairy	14
Mangoes	14
Mushrooms	14
Nuts	15
Oats & Oatmeal	15
Oranges	15
Papaya, Pineapple & Kiwi	15
Potassium-Rich Foods	16
Pumpkin	17
Seeds	18
Soups	18
Soybeans (Edamame & Tofu)	18
Spinach	18
Strawberries	18
Sweet Potatoes	18
Tea & Green Tea	18
Tomatoes	19
Turkey	19
Water – Just A Tap	19
White Fleshy Fruits & Veggies	20
Whole Grains – Hit A Homerun In The Big Game Of Health	20
Wonderful Stuff Also Worth Integrating Into Your Dietary Regimen	20
Yes, Frozen's Got What It Takes, Too	20
Yogurt	21
Zap The Killers	21
Annie, Get Your Grill	21
But Keep It Simple -- Use The MHFL Trapezoid As Your Guide	21
For More Information, Contact`	22

**FLAVORFUL, FUNCTIONAL FOODS & FRESH IDEAS FOR HEALTH.
IT'S ALL IN THE MEDITERRANEAN HARVEST FOR LIFE® DIETARY REGIMEN.**

According to a 2005 *London Times* article, Julian Mellentin, the author of *The Functional Foods Revolution*, noted that functional foods are the food industry's future. "Consumers now look for health benefits from what they eat, so the food industry is focused on building positive additives into their products to meet this demand."

But, in that same article, Catherine Collins, the chief dietitian at St George's Hospital, South London, disagreed that we need to add stuff into our foods to meet our health requirements. "Functional foods containing positive additives, however, are no substitute for a naturally balanced diet," she advised.

The article noted that Collins believes the Mediterranean diet is the ultimate functional diet, with fruit and vegetables, whole-grain cereals, carbs, a modest amount of meat, olive oil and oily fish. "If pursued, there's no need for functional foods. And you don't need to strive for perfect balance every day; nutritional intake averaged out over a week is what counts," she said.

A "DIVINE MIX"

In other articles and web pages, Mediterranean eating has also been referred to as an awesome blend of functional foods. The combination of foods consumed in the Mediterranean region work in concert with one another to produce health results far superior to what's possible via enhanced functional foods or other diets.

Mediterranean style eating reduces the risk of multiple health maladies, and even helps reverse some health issues, and extends lifespans.

The olive oil-rich Mediterranean dietary regimen is believed to be why residents of the 16 countries that border the Mediterranean Sea typically live longer than Americans and have lower rates of these diseases.

"Olive oil plays a central role, but it is not alone," noted Dimitrios Trichopoulos, MD, PhD, of Harvard School of Public Health in an article appearing in WebMD Medical News, June 25, 2003.

"It's among the *divine mix of several factors* that, when used in combination, help provide strong evidence of something that is very important -- eating the proper diet can significantly reduce your risk of early death."

"God knows what sorts of interactions take place within the foods, and we need further research to pinpoint them exactly," Trichopoulos told WebMD.

According to the experts, when the researchers looked at the individual components of the Mediterranean diet, they found no significant decrease in death with any one type of food – it really is due to this "divine mix."

From a comparative basis, Mediterranean-style eating beats other diets. For example, one recent article cited research findings from Ben-Gurion University, Israel, which concluded that **a Mediterranean diet —characterized by high levels of healthy fats, fruits, and vegetables — was superior to a low-fat diet given the many health benefits gained from the diet and how much weight patients lost.**

Importantly, the Mediterranean Diet will impact health even before weight loss. In a 2011 research presentation, Johns Hopkins researchers indicated **swapping out certain foods can improve heart health in those at risk for cardiovascular disease, even if the dietary changes aren't coupled with weight loss.**

And, in the all-important area of stick-to-it-tiveness, the article quotes Dr. Ozner as noting, "The Mediterranean diet is one people can stick to."

But more than just enabling weight loss, as many diets do, the ingredients in Mediterranean-style dietary regimens can deliver overall health results that are more efficacious than some commonly prescribed pharmaceutical products and even some surgical procedures.

Beyond being recognized as a heart-healthy eating plan, a Mediterranean-style dietary regimen may also reduce the risk of diabetes, certain cancers, obesity and Alzheimer's disease, according to the February 2010 Mayo Clinic Women's Healthsource issue and other sources.

In fact, the **risk of death from any cause over a five-year follow-up period was lower for those with the most Mediterranean-like eating styles. In addition, deaths from cancer or cardiovascular disease were significantly lower in this group.**

Furthermore, a University of Naples study concluded that people sticking to a Mediterranean dietary regimen were less likely to develop obesity, high blood pressure, high triglycerides and increased blood sugar levels — a condition known as metabolic syndrome -- and that this style of eating can often reverse these conditions if they do occur.

A Forbes magazine article concluded that heart patients who go on a Mediterranean diet reduce their risk of future heart attacks and cardiac death by up to 70%; while cholesterol-lowering drugs cost us about \$15.0 billion a year and lower the risk only half as much,

Moreover, the impact of Mediterranean-style eating was found to even help offset some of the adverse impacts of smoking. Researchers found that participants who were smokers but were not overweight nearly halved their risk of death when they closely followed the Mediterranean style of eating. In fact, the researchers noted that smokers may have had the most to gain from the antioxidant and blood fat-lowering effects of Mediterranean-style eating.

Likewise, when it comes to reversing conditions of atherosclerosis, *researchers observed in those who had suffered the greatest arterial thickening— due to arteriosclerosis — a significant improvement and regression of lesions having taken place in those cases that had followed a Mediterranean diet enriched with virgin olive oil or nuts.* In fact, for those research participants age 55 and above who already had somewhat thickened arteries, artery thickness was lower among the virgin olive oil and nut consumers,

And you don't have to wait long for results with this dietary regimen when it comes to life threatening atherosclerosis. Experts note a one-year dietary change yields a better health impact than two years of pharmaceuticals -- and just three months of a dietary regimen can yield a health harvest for those suffering from atherosclerosis, according to a September 2011 article in Arteriosclerosis. And according to another study, Mediterranean-style eating is the recipe for achieving healthier blood vessels in just eight weeks.

Overall, Mediterranean style of eating can help reduce the risk of heart failures and their recurrences, cancers, strokes, COPD, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, arthritis, asthma, diabetes, metabolic syndrome, obesity – and even prevents birth defects. You could call it a

“Cradle-To-Grave Solution,” but a more accurate description would be: “Your Cradle-To- (Keep Out-Of-The)-Grave Solution!”

In fact, a Mediterranean style of eating has been shown through research to add two to three years of life to people adopting it in later years. It has also been documented as able to extend the lives of Alzheimer’s patients by as many as 1.3 to 4 years.

Importantly, according to researchers at Maastricht University in the Netherlands, those who adhere to the Mediterranean style of eating -- when combined with exercise, not smoking and maintaining a healthy weight – could potentially add eight to 15 years to their lives. Women can benefit most, as they can potentially live an extra 15 years when compared to those engaged in “least healthy” lifestyles, while men can potentially live eight additional years.



Or Maybe Even



Consider the potential impact to your longevity if you embrace it early in life! Switching to Mediterranean-style eating could be one of the best gifts you could give yourself or those you love.

(Note, while the Mediterranean-style of eating offers tremendous health benefits, you need to consult your physician and specialists on all health matters. This document is not to be received as a medical recommendation and MHFL does not provide medical advice).

Mediterranean Harvest For Life -- Your Cradle-To- (Keep Out-Of-The) Grave Solution:

MHFL’s Functional Food regimen is unique in how it helps avert multiple diseases, improve longevity and help people migrate from current dietary regimens to this healthier regimen.

MHFL ADDS UNIQUE VALUE TO THE MEDITERRANEAN STYLE OF EATING

MHFL uniquely blends the Mediterranean style of eating with an emphasis on high-nutrient/low-calorie, FUNCTIONAL FOODS to deliver significant health benefits... to enable culinary enjoyment... and to foster migration away from our current low-nutrient/high-calorie consumption -- and toward significantly healthier eating.

MHFL was reviewed and validated as a valuable dietary strategy by the University Of Nebraska Food Processing Center – a trusted food industry resource -- and its nutrition scientists. MHFL emphasizes the Mediterranean style of eating proven to impact longevity and improve quality of life, so people can *Enjoy Life More* and *Enjoy More Life*.

Plus, our Mediterranean Harvest For Life can even help you drop those unwanted pounds, fit into that swimsuit and feel better about yourself -- even more so than those “low fat” diets.

Specifically because many people need help migrating off of their high caloric intakes, Mediterranean Harvest For Life uniquely incorporates foods that help you fill up without contributing excess calories. It’s a tasty regimen people can stick to.

Importantly, as you review this document, you'll see virtually all of the foods in the Mediterranean Harvest For Life dietary regimen are familiar, not foreign foods! Foods that taste great and are great for you – and comprise a dietary regimen we consider "*The Best Of All Functional Foods.*"

If you appreciate the insights on all the Functional Foods in this document, you'll also want to review the *Mediterranean Harvest For Life Research Document* on the documented health impacts of Mediterranean style eating. You may also want to join the MHFL League of concerned individuals seeking to improve their health and impact the health of others they care about.

The following pages provide a glimpse into how food functions to help us avert adverse health conditions and extend our lifespans. We hope you enjoy this document and apply what you learn in your daily food choices.

Viva Mediterranean!

THE BASICS OF MEDITERRANEAN STYLE EATING

In addition to having olive oil with meals typical Mediterranean eating is high in vegetables, fruits, legumes, nuts, whole grains/cereals; moderate in fish intake; and has lower amounts of meat and dairy than the typical American diet. It's a cornucopia of Functional Foods that makes for great eating!

This dietary regimen influences the course of diseases by affecting the body weight, which impacts blood sugar and blood pressure; blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels; anti-oxidant levels, including vitamin A, E, C, beta-carotene and phyto-chemicals; the process of anti-clotting and the anti-inflammatory properties; and more.

Some examples of considerations for eating Mediterranean style include:

Dig into plant sources often, in a variety of forms – including lots of colorful fruits and veggies, potatoes, breads, grains, beans, nuts and seeds.

Eat fresh fruit as both a daily dessert and a main menu item; get inventive with fruits, like using blueberries in a bisque. For example: an apple a day is a great, tried and true dietary strategy.

Stick to the source: avoid processed foods. When possible, select seasonal, fresh and locally grown foods. When fresh isn't available or viable, frozen fits the bill and captures the nutrients.

Use olive oil as your good fat, replacing most other fats and oils. Also get Omega 3 fats from fish.

Our aggregate dietary fat should range from 25% to 35% of calories, coming from "good fats." Keep saturated fats to no more than 7% to 8% of total calories.

Stop asking "where's the beef" all the time and start thinking swimming and flying.

Consume moderate amounts of fish and poultry weekly, e.g. the Omega 3 fatty fish and turkey, especially turkey breast.

Use lean meat -- beef, veal, pork and lamb – just a few times per month or reduce the proportion of meats amid a more balanced plate full of good stuff.

Consider Shish-Kebabs to balance your meat with fruits and vegetables, or perfect an award-winning chili with high value beans, chili pepper, ground turkey and other goodies.

Enjoy grilling again as a lean way of cooking.

Enjoy cheese and yogurt daily in low to moderate quantities.

Resist treats that have tons of sugar, saturated fat or processed grains. Get creative with desserts and consider substituting apricots for sugar in whole grain baking.

Get active enough to sweat a bit – exercise at a level that promotes a healthy weight, fitness and well-being. Consider walking, bicycling, badminton and gardening.

Get into good drinks, especially Concord grape juice, carrot juice, and fruit smoothies – and reevaluate whether you really need the alcohol. Note you can get the benefits of wine in Concord grape juice!

MEDITERRANEAN HARVEST FOR LIFE = THE BEST OF ALL FUNCTIONAL FOODS

ENJOY THE INCREDIBLE FUNCTIONAL BENEFITS OF OLIVE OIL, OMEGA 3, NUTS, POTASSIUM AND OTHER GOOD STUFF.

The Mediterranean diet is considered the ultimate "Functional Food" diet, with fruit and vegetables, whole-grain cereals, carbs, a modest amount of meat, olive oil and oily fish. MHFL blends the merits of this incredible eating style with a concentration on High Octane Functional Foods (high nutrient/low caloric foods) and strategies to help people migrate to – and stick with -- this essential healthy eating regimen.

By following the Mediterranean Harvest For Life dietary regimen, there's more than likely no need for food industry manufactured, additive-enhanced Functional Foods.

Importantly, while Mediterranean Harvest For Life should provide you with tremendous health benefits, MHFL does not imply or suggest this is a medical treatment. MHFL advises that you consult a physician regarding any and all medical issues.

The following list highlights just some of the "Functional Food" ingredients featured in the Mediterranean Harvest For Life regimen as well as their tremendous health benefits. NOTE: this is not an all inclusive list, but a list that highlights key MHFL High Octane Functional Foods.

Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Note: while this entry would not typically come first in a list that's constructed alphabetically, Olive Oil is too important to overlook. So we've put it first among our list of Functional Foods.

Olive oil can lower "bad," low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, aid digestion, hold off aging and cut the risk of coronary disease and cancers. It lowers the risk of coronary heart disease by reducing blood cholesterol levels.

Thomas Jefferson reportedly remarked that "the olive tree is surely the richest gift of Heaven."

Olive oil is a key ingredient in the Mediterranean style of eating and has been identified as leading to low rates of coronary disease and cancers. Research continues to unearth amazing facts about the properties of olive oil and their effects on high blood cholesterol. Olive oil is rich in the antioxidant vitamin E, (antioxidants help process the waste products of the body: they keep us healthy and young) and other less well-known antioxidants.

Olive oil is considered a healthy dietary oil because of its high content of monounsaturated fat (mainly oleic acid) and polyphenol. Study after study affirms the health benefits of EVOO.

Monounsaturated fat is the "good" kind of fat. Monounsaturated fats don't build up and clog arteries the way saturated fats, such as butter, do.

Olive oil is a healthy fat and it helps to metabolize other foods. More than 30 plant compounds contribute to olive oil's benefits. These compounds' antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects promote heart health and protect against cancer.

Replacing saturated fats, such as butter and margarine, with olive oil will lower blood cholesterol. And what's good for your heart – what's "heart healthy" -- is good for cancer prevention.

Olive oil also influences body fat distribution, with less fat stored around the stomach.

And although olive oil doesn't offer the healthful omega-3 fat found in seafood, it does strengthen omega-3's anti-inflammatory effects. The Food and Drug Administration recently agreed to allow olive oil producers to affix a label on bottles that says: "Limited and not conclusive scientific evidence suggests that eating about two tablespoons of olive oil daily may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease due to the monounsaturated fat in olive oil."

To achieve this possible benefit, olive oil is to replace a similar amount of saturated fat and not increase the total number of calories you eat in a day."

In particular, olive oil is a source of oleic acid. Northwestern University laboratory tests on breast cancer cells showed oleic acid sharply cut levels of a gene thought to trigger the disease. The researchers found that oleic acid cut activity levels of a gene called Her-2/ neu, which occurs at high levels in over a fifth of breast cancer patients and is associated with highly aggressive tumors with a poor prognosis.

Not only did oleic acid suppress activity of the gene, it also boosted the effectiveness of a breast cancer drug called herceptin, which has helped to prolong the lives of many patients.

What Kind Of Olive Oil Is Right?

Created by pressing or crushing olives, olive oil is available in different varieties, depending on the amount of processing involved. Varieties include extra virgin (considered best, coming from the first pressing of the olives), virgin (second pressing), pure (some filtering and refining) and extra light (most processed).

Olive oil can replace butter or margarine in baking. Three tablespoons of mild or light olive oil can be used as a substitute for a quarter cup of butter.

If you're using oils, olive oil is the best. And when you do add olive oil to your diet, try to reduce your use of other non-productive calorie foods. A tablespoon has about 120 calories.

Antioxidants -- Such As Vitamins C And E

Antioxidants such as Vitamins C and E and carotenoids are beneficial in disease prevention and health promotion.

Dietary regimens rich in whole and unrefined foods like whole grains, leafy green vegetables, nuts and legumes – such as is in Mediterranean Harvest For Life -- contain high concentrates of antioxidant phenolics and other phytochemicals that play important roles in preventing or delaying onset of coronary heart disease, cancer, non-insulin depended diabetes and colon dysfunction.

[Get Your Antioxidants From Foods In Mediterranean Harvest For Life Vs. Supplements](#)
Nutrition experts now say that phytonutrients are a major source of dietary antioxidants. Antioxidants help protect cells from damage. Many scientists believe they offer protection against heart disease and cancer, and conditions related to aging such as the loss of mental acuity and motor skills.

With recent studies casting doubt on the effectiveness of antioxidant supplementation, the need to get our antioxidants naturally from food becomes all the more important.

Apples

Maybe the reason you can see a star when you slice most apples horizontally is because apples are real health stars. We get tremendous health benefits from an apple's ability to deliver fiber, flavonoids, and fructose. So, an apple a day really can keep the doctor away.

And by delivering both insoluble and soluble fiber, apples will help lower your cholesterol levels and thus reduce your risk of hardening of the arteries, heart attack, and stroke.

Apple's soluble fiber pectin reduces the amount of LDL cholesterol produced in the liver. Eating a large apple every day can decrease serum cholesterol 8-11%. Eating 2 can lower cholesterol levels up to a whopping 16%! With just one medium unpeeled apple, you'll get more than 3 grams of fiber, or more than 10% of the recommended daily fiber intake.

Apricots

Fresh apricots are high in beta-carotene and contain vitamin C and fiber. Consider using them in a whole grain-crust apple pie vs. sugar. Yum.

Bananas

Bananas contain lots of magnesium (to protect the circulatory system), potassium and slowly-absorbed sugars. Bananas give us a good amount of pectin (a soluble fiber). The banana prevents radical swings in our blood sugar and also helps absorb sodium. Freeze them when ripe and use them in a smoothie.

Beans

Beans are high in protein, fiber (both soluble and insoluble fiber), B vitamins, iron, calcium, and magnesium. They contain complex carbohydrates and phytochemicals and protease inhibitors that may help prevent cancer. Beans are low in fat. Beans, beans, the more you eat – the better.

Blueberries

Blueberries are truly an awesome food. They can reduce the risk of cancer and cardiovascular disease. They're a source of great nutrition -- with no fat and lots of antioxidants. The compounds in blueberries may actually inhibit cancer in the first stage and in other critical stages.

All berries are especially rich in a substance called ellagic acid, which has shown the ability to prevent cancers of the skin, bladder, lung, esophagus and breast in laboratory studies. Ellagic acid acts as an antioxidant, along with helping the body deactivate specific carcinogens. It may also slow the reproduction of cancer cells.

Brightly Colored Fruits & Vegetables

We should all strive to live more colorful lives by eating at least five to nine servings of brightly colored fruits and veggies a day. Beyond blueberries and apples, explore strawberries, oranges, pineapples, cantaloupes and others – they all pack a powerfully good punch. Dark leafy veggies – like spinach and kale -- are awesome, too. So are colorful carrots, pumpkin and sweet potato.

Eating a lot of fruits and vegetables should not be as challenging as it might seem. A serving can be one medium-size fruit, a half cup of cooked vegetables, three-quarters of a cup of 100-percent juice, one cup of raw leafy vegetables, a quarter cup of dried fruit. So brighten up!

Broccoli

Broccoli is huge when it comes to healthy. USDA says boiled broccoli has more vitamin C than an orange and as much calcium as a glass of milk. It's one of the best sources of vitamin A. You can get three times more fiber than a slice of wheat bran bread.

Broccoli is a world champion cancer fighter. Broccoli has lots of isothiocyanates which encourage the body's production of cancer-fighting enzymes, called "phase two enzymes." They fight off potential cancer-causing substances so they can't affect the DNA of healthy cells.

Buckwheat

Buckwheat may help with reducing hunger pangs and can help keep glucose levels in check better than other carbohydrates. It's one of the best plant sources of protein and is also rich in lysine.

Calcium

Calcium helps build strong bones and prevents osteoporosis. Added bonus: Calcium may help with weight loss. Below are recommended daily calcium levels for adults according to the USDA: age 19 to 50, get 1,000 mg; age 51 and over, get 1,200 mg. Consider these sources of Calcium and add them to your diet:

<u>Food Type Containing Calcium</u>	<u>MG Of Calcium</u>	<u>% Of Daily Requirement</u>
Sardines, canned in oil, with bones, 3 oz.	324	32%
Milk, non-fat, 8 fl oz.	302	30%
Tofu, firm, made w/calcium sulfate, ½ cup***	204	20%
Orange juice, calcium fortified, 6 fl oz.	200-260	20-26%
Salmon, pink, canned, solids with bone, 3 oz.	181	18%
Spinach, cooked, ½ cup	120	12%
Instant breakfast drink, various flavors and brands, powder prepared with water, 8 fl oz.	105-250	10-25%
Frozen yogurt, vanilla, soft serve, ½ cup	103	10%
Ready to eat cereal, calcium fortified, 1 cup	100-1000	10%-100%
Turnip greens, boiled, ½ cup	99	10%
Kale, cooked, 1 cup	94	9%
Kale, raw, 1 cup	90	9%
Soy beverage, calcium fortified, 8 fl oz.	80-500	8-50%
Chinese cabbage, raw, 1 cup	74	7%
Tortilla, corn, ready to bake, 1 medium	42	4%
Tortilla, flour, ready to bake, one 6" diameter	37	4%
Broccoli, raw, ½ cup	21	2%
Bread, whole wheat, 1 slice	20	2%

Cantaloupes

Cantaloupes are good source of Vitamin A, beta-carotene, and Vitamin C, Potassium, Vitamin B3, Vitamin B6, Folate, and Fiber. One cup has just 56 calories but provides 103.2% of the daily value for Vitamin A. Vitamin A and beta-carotene are important for vision. Beta-carotene may help with prevention of cancer and oxygen-based damage to cells. Vitamin C, an antioxidant, stimulates white cells to fight infection, kills bacteria and viruses, and regenerates Vitamin E.

Carrots

Reports indicate that eating two carrots every other day provide enough beta carotene to reduce stroke risk by half for men with symptoms of heart disease. Carrots make a great juice.

Chili Peppers

Chili peppers contain the antioxidant capsaicin. Chili peppers contain blood thinning properties to prevent strokes, lower cholesterol, and protect your DNA against carcinogens. Chili peppers may stimulate release of endorphins to make you feel good. So you should feel real good about migrating away from some of your meat-and potato-only dishes and toward a good turkey chili!

Coffee

The deliberations are in and the jury has concluded coffee is more healthful than harmful. Disease-fighting antioxidants, called quinines, are contained in the beans. Research on Coffee has shown significant health risk reduction: Parkinson's disease can be reduced by 80%, colon cancer by 25%, cirrhosis of the liver by 80%, and gallstones by 50%. Quinines and the magnesium in coffee affect blood sugar levels and are thought to be responsible for the link to a lower risk of type 2 diabetes.

Analysis of eight studies concluded adults who drank six to seven cups of coffee a day lowered risk of diabetes by one-third vs. those who drink just two cups per day. Drinking two or three cups per day lowered women's diabetes risk by 13%. Four or more cut the risk by over 40%.

Note: caffeine can have some risks, such as potential to raise cholesterol (suggesting a need to offset coffee consumption with foods that lower cholesterol.) Also, coffee consumption is not advisable for heart or osteoporosis patients & pregnant women.

Concord Grape Juice Is Even Better Than Wine

While you may have heard of the value in drinking wine as part of a Mediterranean style of eating, there are hundreds of studies supporting the health benefits of Concord grape juice.

Concord grape juice produces effects like reducing the tendency of the blood to form clots, improved arterial function and flexibility, and improved blood pressure. Drinking Concord grape juice inhibits the development of blocked arteries, increases the levels of HDL -- the "good" cholesterol -- and reduces blood pressure. Drinking juice made from Concord grapes for 8 weeks can produce a reduction in blood pressure.

Cruciferous Vegetables

Beyond broccoli, there's an entire category of great veggies called cruciferous vegetables. They include Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, cabbages and mustard greens. Cruciferous vegetables help regulate body enzymes that defend against cancer and lower the risk for lung, stomach and colorectal cancers. These vegetables should make their way onto your plates, based on their supplying the valuable phytochemicals and antioxidants we need. Phytochemicals are chemical compounds found only in plant foods. Phytochemicals are essential for good health, cancer prevention and the prevention of other chronic health problems.

Dark Chocolate

While we're not a proponent of sweets, we must confess there's nutritional value in Dark Chocolate. Dark chocolate -- with 60% or higher cocoa content -- is packed with antioxidants and can lower blood pressure. The darker the chocolate, the lower the fat and sugar content.

Fatty Fish With Omega 3

Omega 3s in fish lower heart disease and cancer risk; help with arthritis; may help with memory loss and Alzheimer's and may even reduce depression.

Fatty fish -- such as Wild Salmon, Mackerel, Herring, Pompano, Sardines and others -- contain certain oils and fats that promote health. These omega-3 fats promote heart health and lower the risk of cancer by reducing inflammation.

Omega-3 fatty acids lower levels of triglycerides, a type of fat in the bloodstream. Omega-3 fatty acids may slow the growth of plaques in the arteries and reduce swelling throughout the body.

Your dietary regimen should include two-to-three servings a week of Omega 3 rich fish. Studies indicate eating fatty fish twice-weekly lowers your risk for breast, colon and prostate cancer.

Fish oils get incorporated into cell membranes, which changes the way the cells work and makes them more fluid. To get the most health benefits from omega-3, you should rely on fish sources: salmon, trout and other fatty fish, algae or fish oil -- not supplements or food additives.

The following lists the type of fish by the amount of Omega 3. NOTE: Omega 3s are also available in fortified eggs, flaxseed, and walnuts.

Fish With High Amounts Of Omega 3: Herring; Mackerel; Pompano; Sardines; Wild Salmon. (Remember you should really GO WILD with salmon -- versus eating farm raised salmon.)

Fish With Medium Amounts Of Omega 3: Bluefin Tuna; Bluefish; Freshwater Bass; Mullet; Orange Roughy.

Fish With Low Amounts Of Omega 3: Cod; Flounder; Haddock; Halibut; Perch; Pollack; Rainbow Trout; Red Snapper; Sea Bass; Yellow Fin Tuna.

Fiber

As well as reducing your risk of constipation, a high-fiber diet may also decrease your risk of obesity, heart disease, diabetes and certain cancers. Good sources of dietary fiber include wholegrain cereal, bread, pasta, fruits and vegetables. Peas, beans, dried fruits and nuts are high in both fiber and protein. Daily recommended fiber intake is 38g for males, and 25g females.

Flaxseed

This 100% whole wheat grain provides fiber, lignans and Omega 3 Fats. Just two tablespoons of flaxseed meal delivers 4 grams of fiber -- as much fiber as 1-1.5 cups of cooked oatmeal. Flaxseed can help reduce harmful LDL cholesterol and keep good HDL cholesterol in check. Lignans can help maintain colon and breast health by binding circulating estrogens and other substances that might promote unchecked cell growth. To get the same amount of lignans present in just two tablespoons of flaxseed, broccoli, you'd need to consume 30 cups of that broccoli. Flaxseed also has Alpha Linolenic Acid omega 3. One serving of flaxseed meal contains 2400 milligrams of Omega-3

Garlic

Garlic has anti-bacterial, anti-viral, anti-ulcer and anti-clotting properties. It also reduces cholesterol providing cardiovascular protection and is a good anti-oxidant. Garlic may lower cholesterol and blood pressure and contain chemicals capable of destroying cancer cells.

Grapefruit

Concerned about diabetes? Need to lose weight? Grapefruit may help reduce weight and cut the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, based on a recent study. Participants who ate a grapefruit each meal for 12 weeks lost 3.6 pounds (some 10 pounds), a group who didn't eat grapefruit lost 1/2 pound. And after meals, grapefruit eaters had lower levels of insulin and blood sugar.

Experts note they likely lost weight due to replacing other higher calorie foods. Or perhaps it's because grapefruit causes you to slow down in consuming your overall meal which affords time to receive brain signals letting you know you're full. A grapefruit does take time and effort to eat. It also adds 3.5 grams of fiber with only 74 calories. But note that grapefruit can interfere with the effectiveness of some medications, so check with your pharmacist if you're on medication.

Lean Meats & Poultry

Lean is keen when it comes to eating meats. And rather than using meat as the main entree, try mixing your meats into other more balanced meals such as chili, soup, salad and shish-kebabs.

Concentrate on Bison (Buffalo); Elk; Lamb (Well-trimmed Shank Half Cuts); Lean Beef (Bottom Sirloin); Lean Pork (Boneless Sirloin Pork Chops; Pork Loin Roast; Top Loin Chops); Rabbit; Top Round Veal; Venison. Grass fed beef is a good source of Omega 3.

For poultry, you won't go afoul of healthy eating with lean breast meats from among Chicken; Duck; Goose; Turkey. Don't forget the incredibly edibly egg. (I know, it's really edible, not edibly.)

Low Fat Dairy

Low-fat dairy can provide multiple health benefits. Adequate intake of milk and milk products is linked to improved bone health, especially in children and adolescents, and is associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes and with lower blood pressure in adults. Milk is the number one source of 3 of 4 nutrients often lacking in the American diet: calcium, vitamin D and potassium.

Mangoes

Mangoes contain bioflavonoids that aid the immune system.

Mushrooms

A shish kebab keeper and great on salads, mushrooms contain beta-glucan, which aids our immune systems. Shitake, enoki, zhuling and reishi mushrooms all provide anti-cancer and antiviral benefits.

Nuts

Remember, the first three letters in nutrition are NUT! Nuts are densely packaged nutrients with wide-ranging cardiovascular and metabolic benefits. Go nuts!

Nuts are not only energy dense foods; they are rich sources of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids and other bioactive nutrients with important metabolic effects.

Nuts help manage LDL-cholesterol. Regular consumption of nuts may also help to counteract other cardiovascular and metabolic risk factors.

Plus, regular consumption of nuts may help to regulate body weight by suppressing appetite and fat absorption. Nut consumption counteracts dyslipidemia and can improve circulatory function through the actions of multiple constituents (arginine, polyphenols) on endothelial mechanisms.

Experts advise eating Vitamin E-rich almonds to boost antioxidant intake. Almonds also contain a substantial amount of gamma-tocopherols, which is such a powerful antioxidant that it is often used by the food industry as a natural antioxidant to preserve fats from spoilage.

Tree nuts such as almonds are rich in tocopherols, a group of major antioxidants that have vitamin-E activity. Tocopherols quench free radicals and help prevent oxidative damage to cells.

One ounce of almonds (20-30) contains 35% of the RDA of Vitamin E.

Walnuts belong in a low-cholesterol diet.

Experts recommend eating a handful of walnuts each day as part of a healthy diet. Eating walnuts increases good HDL cholesterol and lowers bad LDL cholesterol levels.

Walnuts also have high levels of omega-3 fatty acids that other nuts don't. There is good evidence walnuts can reduce the risk of heart disease.

Incorporating macadamia nuts into a heart healthy diet can reduce cardiovascular disease risks. Versus other tree nuts, Macadamia nuts have high levels of monounsaturated fats, as in olive oil.

Oats & Oatmeal

Part of the whole grain universe but worthy of attention, the old standby oatmeal really will improve your health. It's a heart-healthy food that's really good at effectively lowering cholesterol. The benefits of oatmeal are due to the fact that it's made from oats and oats are a good source of both soluble and insoluble fiber. Consider, too, the value in steel cut oats.

Oranges

Oranges contain vitamin C which helps your body fight cancers (lung, cervical, esophagus & stomach) and are rich in bioflavonoids. Orange you glad we mentioned this wonderful fruit?

Papaya, Pineapple & Kiwi

Papaya, Pineapple & Kiwis deliver high amounts of enzymes which reportedly could help with autoimmune diseases, allergies, cancers. Pineapples also contain bromelain which research suggests helps reduce inflammation associated with asthma and may inhibit growth of malignant cells in lung and breast cancer. Pineapple's phenolic compounds also provide protective benefits.

And don't forget, pineapples look and taste great grilled in a shish-Kebab.

Potassium-Rich Foods

This important nutrient is often overlooked by many people. Too little potassium? Then nerve impulses will not travel and muscles will not contract.

Potassium is the seventh most plentiful mineral on the planet, but most of us don't get enough of it. Our bodies use 20 to 40% of the energy necessary to keep us alive continually pumping potassium into our cells.

A potassium-rich diet protects against high blood pressure, strokes, kidney stones and even bone loss. A diet low in potassium and high in sodium may be a factor in high blood pressure. Increasing potassium in the diet may protect against hypertension in people who are sensitive to high levels of sodium.

Potassium works with sodium to maintain the body's water balance. One possible explanation for potassium's protective effect against hypertension is that increased potassium may increase the amount of sodium excreted from the body.

Experts say most men and women should consume at least 4,700 mg of potassium every day, primarily from fruits and vegetables.

The health benefits of potassium include:

Potassium Lowers Blood Pressure

3,100 mg of potassium a day can reduce blood pressure in those with hypertension.

A potassium-rich diet does naturally help lower blood pressure, but it can be reduced even more by combining a lot of fruits and vegetables (eight to 10 servings a day), two to three servings of low-fat dairy products, lower amounts of protein (up to two servings a day), and nuts, seeds and beans.

It's one key contributor to lowering blood pressure -- even without drugs.

Potassium Keeps Bones Strong

Potassium citrate is metabolized into bicarbonate to neutralize acid in the body. If there is not enough bicarbonate available, however, the body takes calcium carbonate from the bones to balance the acid excess and that can lead to bone loss.

Potassium Reduces the Incidence of Stroke

In the long-term Health Professional Study of 43,000 men, those who consumed the most potassium (about 4,300 mg a day) over an eight-year period had a 40 per cent lower risk of strokes than those who consumed less.

How potassium prevents strokes is not entirely clear, but it may work through its effect on blood pressure. Controlling blood pressure lowers the risk of stroke by 35 to 40 per cent.

Potassium Reduces Kidney Stones

People who consumed at least 4,000 mg of potassium from food each day have a 25 to 50 percent lower risk of kidney stones than those who consumed less. Potassium likely helps reduce kidney stones due to potassium citrate. The citrate binds with calcium, so less calcium goes into the urine to produce stones. The potassium citrate also produces a less acidic environment which makes kidney stones less likely to form.

Can Too Much Potassium Be Harmful?

Typically that's not been the issue – most people need to step up potassium intake. However people with diabetes or kidney disease should not increase their potassium intake until they have spoken with their doctor. It is also recommended people who take certain drugs to lower their blood pressure should also speak to their doctor before increasing potassium in the diet.

One universal caution: Potassium supplements can be toxic. An irregular heartbeat is the most serious side effect. However, the 40 mg in daily multivitamins has been considered by experts to be safe. But again, a doctor should be consulted about this if there are any concerns.

Bottom line: increase potassium primarily through vegetables and fruits. You'll increase fiber, antioxidant, phytochemical and vitamin intake at the same time.

Food Source	Amount Of Potassium (mg)
Potato, baked with skin	1080
Sweet Potato, baked with skin	690
Banana	590
Lima Beans	580
Halibut, 3 oz., (85 g) cooked	490
OJ, 1 cup (250 ml)	480
Acorn Squash, ½ cup, (125 ml), cooked	450
Cantaloupe, 1 cup (250 ml)	430
Spinach, ½ cup, (125 ml), cooked	420
Navy Beans, ½ cup, (125 ml), cooked	395
Lentils, ½ cup, (125 ml), cooked	365
Papaya, 1 cup (250 ml)	360
Wheat germ, 2 tbsp (25 ml)	270
Almonds, 20 nuts	210

Pumpkin

Pumpkin is one of the most nutritionally valuable foods available. It's inexpensive, available year round in canned form, high in fiber, low in calories, and packs a bunch of disease fighting nutrients.

Pumpkin provides powerful carotenoids (antioxidants). Carotenoids can ward off the risk of several cancers and heart disease, along with cataracts and macular degeneration.

Pumpkin has lots of fiber and a serving has just 40 calories. Pumpkin is considered one of the great weight-loss foods. Plus pumpkin is easy to prepare.

Charles Schulz had it right when he coined the "Great Pumpkin." So fall in love with pumpkin -- and not just for the fall.

Seeds

Eating seeds is also important, including cucumber seeds, flax seeds, fenugreek seeds, grape seeds, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds and watermelon seeds.

Soups

Eating a low-calorie soup before a meal can help cut back on how much food and calories you eat at the meal. Eating soup before a lunch entrée can help you reduce total calorie intake at lunch (soup + entrée) by 20 percent, compared to when you do not eat soup. Any low-calorie soup is filling regardless of its form – it doesn't have to be the chunky variety.

Soybeans (Edamame, Tofu)

These contain important plant chemicals called Isoflavones, which have powerful antioxidant properties ideal for protection against heart disease and stroke. Adding 25 gm of soybean protein to the diet lowers blood cholesterol levels by 12% -15%. But for those with a family history of breast cancer, it is not recommended that you eat extra soy.

Spinach

Spinach is worthy of particular mention among dark leafy green vegetables. Popeye was right, Spinach is a nutrition powerhouse. Great cold in salads or cooked, Spinach offers twice as much fiber as other greens, is a good source and is loaded with vitamins and minerals. We recommend sticking with Popeye and Olive Oil.

Spinach is a great source of disease fighting antioxidant beta-carotene which helps reduce cataracts, heart disease and cancer. Its potassium will promote heart health, too. Spinach contains vitamins A and C, folic acid and magnesium which help control cancer, reduce heart disease and stroke risk, block free radicals and may help prevent osteoporosis.

It produces phytochemicals, including lutein, which help prevent age-related macular degeneration. Spinach also contains lipoic acid, which helps antioxidant vitamins C and E regenerate. Because of its role in energy production, lipoic acid is being investigated for regulating blood sugar levels.

MHFL recommends using both raw and cooked in your dietary regimen. Served raw, spinach is an awesome source of the antioxidant vitamin C. Overcook it, though, and you lose most of this important vitamin. However, don't shy away from cooking spinach. When served cooked spinach concentrates its nutrients and fiber.

Strawberries

Great mixed into salads, in yogurt & fruit smoothies or just eaten plain with or without other fruits, strawberries house ellagic acid, which contains anti-cancer properties.

Sweet Potatoes

Sweet potatoes provide lots of beta-carotene which may prevent cancer both by neutralizing free radicals and by promoting communication among cells. They also aid our eyes, as they're a top source of vitamin A (one offers over 360% of recommended amounts) and carotenoids to cut age-related macular degeneration. So switch from French fries to baked sweet potato wedges!

Tea & Green Tea

The antioxidants in black tea equal that in green tea, but green tea has ECGC. Studies show this antioxidant may inhibit growth of cancer cells. Green Tea can potentially lower cholesterol, too.

Tomatoes

Tomatoes and tomato products contain lycopene, a potent antioxidant. Lycopene and its associated compounds have shown anti-cancer potential in many studies, according to the American Institute for Cancer Research. Lycopene is more available to the body if it's consumed in a processed form, such as tomato juice or tomato sauce.

Tomato components can potentially stop the proliferation of several types of cancer cells, including breast, lung and endometrium.

Diets high in tomatoes lower prostate cancer risk, as well as lower risk of stomach and pancreatic cancers, says the cancer research group. Tomatoes can be helpful in fighting prostate cancer because lycopene and its related compounds tend to concentrate in tissues of the prostate.

One study that tracked the diets of a large group of men for six years found that those who ate the most tomato products (cooked tomatoes, tomato sauce, pizza and tomato juice) had a 35 percent lower risk of early prostate cancer and a 53 percent lower risk of advanced prostate cancer than men who ate the least of these foods.

Turkey

Eat some awesome turkey and gobble up tons of nutrients, including niacin, selenium, vitamins B6 and B12, and zinc. These nutrients help our hearts stay healthy and help to lower cancer risk. Skinless turkey breast is also one of the leanest meat protein sources available. And ground turkey can make a great chili when accompanied by beans, good veggies and healthful chili pepper. No wonder wise old Ben Franklin wanted turkey to be the U. S. national bird.

Water – Just A Tap

It is very important to keep ourselves hydrated. However, new research suggests we don't need the 8 glasses of water – when we get a significant amount of water from our foods. Scottish practitioner Margaret McCartney called it "thoroughly debunked nonsense" in research appearing in the *British Medical Journal*. Mayo Clinic's website says that the eight eight-ounce glasses of water a day "isn't really supported by scientific evidence" and that "if you drink enough fluid so that you rarely feel thirsty" and produce enough clear or light yellow urine a day, you should be fine. "

White Fleshy Fruits & Veggies

A study from Wageningen University, Netherlands indicates those consuming the highest amounts of white fleshed fruits and vegetables saw 52% lower incidence of stroke over a ten-year period compared to the group with the lowest intake. Each 25 gram per day increase in white fruits and vegetable consumption was associated with a 9 percent lower risk of stroke (the average apple is 120 grams).

Some examples of white fruits and veggies include apples, pears, apple juice, bananas, cauliflower, chicory, cucumber, mushrooms, white potatoes and soybeans.

Whole Grains Hit A Home Run In The Big Game Of Health

The roster of whole grain all-star hitters includes: barley; brown rice; amaranth; bulgar; millet; quinoa; oatmeal; popcorn; sorghum; tricale; whole oats, rye, wheat; and wild rice. Scientific trials have also proven the protective ability of whole grains, coarse grains, wheat germ, oat bran, barley, barley porridge, millets, muesli, porridge, wholegrain bread, pulses, Bengal gram, steel-cut oats; soybean and lentils

Whole grains significantly reduce the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and digestive system and hormone-related cancers. Studies show whole grains reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering cholesterol levels, blood pressure, and blood coagulation. Whole-grains should help you keep weight off.

Diabetics should find whole grains may regulate blood sugar – but recent findings indicate whole grains should be combined with even greater focus on legumes, nuts, peas, lentils, vegetables, and fruits (the low-glycemic foods) to really help diabetics in lowering their blood sugar and other risk factors that contribute to heart disease in diabetics. (Overall, low glycemic foods beat high-cereal-fiber diets in helping diabetics address blood sugar and risks of heart disease.) These studies also cited pasta (preferably whole grain pasta) as a valuable menu item too.

Grains are whole grains when they contain the bran, germ and endosperm. Whole grain foods are not refined: they contain all three parts of the grain, including the two lost in the refining process -- the outer layer, bran, which provides fiber, B vitamins, and antioxidants; and the germ, the nutrient-packed inner portion, containing **protein**, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.

Refined grain products provide far less nutritional value. The starchy part of the grain left in refined products -- the endosperm -- contains some **protein** and lots of carbs but few nutrients.

As a great source of antioxidants, whole grains deliver B vitamins, Vitamin E, magnesium, iron and fiber, they can even provide valuable antioxidants not found in some fruits and vegetables. The germ and bran of the grain contain most of the antioxidants and vitamins.

Wonderful Stuff Also Worth Integrating Into Your Dietary Regimen

Also consider the following drinks, herbs and supplements worth incorporating into a health regime: Carrot Juice; Calcium; Cayenne, Chives; Fruit Smoothies; Ginger; Parsley; Peppermint; Rosemary; Turmeric; Wheat/Barley Grass Drinks.

Yes – Frozen’s Got What It Takes, Too

Fresh food is great, but it can spoil, and certain favorite foods may not always be available in the grocer’s produce bin. Fresh food can also be costly. So, when fresh isn’t possible, don’t despair -- choose Frozen instead.

Fact is, with today’s advanced farming and freezing techniques, produce can be harvested and frozen close to the original source, such that all the nutrients are captured. This close to the source freezing compares very favorably – sometimes even better in terms of nutrient value -- with “fresh” produce that has been shipped to grocers, and may have lost some of its appeal and nutrients in the lengthy process. Again, frozen foods can often be cheaper for those on a budget. Plus, they won’t go to waste if they’re not eaten right away – a key budget saver.

Yogurt

With its blend of carbohydrates and proteins, a low fat yogurt may help cut hunger and help reduce your overall weight. Six ounces of plain, low-fat yogurt has about 9 grams of protein, 12 grams of carbohydrates (from milk, not sugar), and 311 milligrams of calcium. And it's a fun dietary base into which we can add other healthy stuff like fruit or flaxseed that's rich in Omega 3.

Yogurt likely helps you feel full when you have to make dietary adjustments and cut calories. In a recent study of obese adults who ate three, 6-ounce servings of fat-free yogurt as part of a daily diet 500 calories lower than their normal intake, the yogurt eaters lost 22% more weight and 61% more body fat than another group who ate 500 less calories *without* calcium-rich yogurt or other calcium-rich foods. Plus those who ate the yogurt also lost 81% more stomach fat.

Zap The Killers

Trans fatty acids, high sodium intake, high alcohol intake and being overweight contribute to increased risk for developing heart disease.

Annie, Get Your Grill

Not only is grilling the best way make a Shish Kebab (a food that can help you migrate from a primarily meat-and-potatoes-diet to the more balanced MHFL regimen) this ingenious way of cooking also keeps unwanted fats dripping away from the meat you eat. And that's NEAT! And even more important, though – grilling is FUN!!!! Some grills, like a George Foreman Grill®, can be used safely inside for year round culinary excitement.

But Keep It Simple -- Use The MHFL Trapezoid As Your Guide

We hope you enjoyed this handy guide to the “*The Best Of All Functional Foods*” that are associated with the Mediterranean Harvest For Life dietary regimen.

But perhaps you're thinking – there's a lot here! Fortunately, it's all good. But it's still a lot.

So to help keep it simple, simply refer to the Mediterranean Harvest For Life Trapezoid for a condensed view of these healthy eating instructions. Why not post a copy of it on your refrigerator.



**Lifestyle Management
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