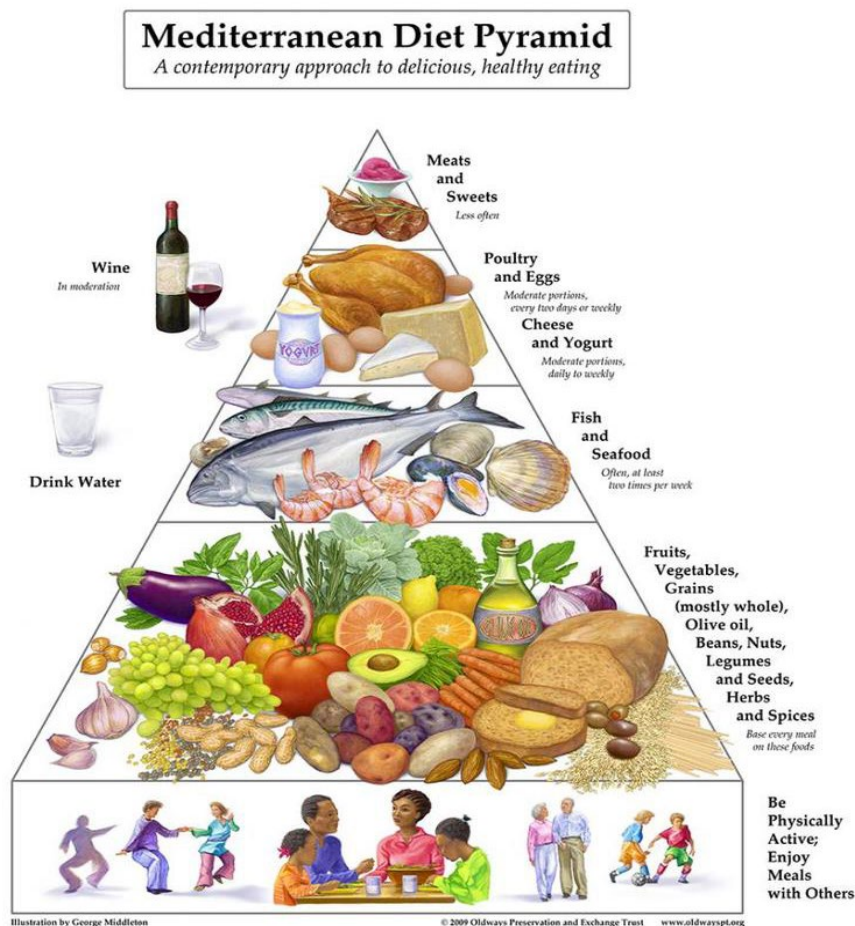


Eating for a Healthy Heart

Following a Heart Healthy Dietary Pattern

There are many different types of 'diets' but some are not based on evidence and may be difficult to follow. The heart healthy eating principles have been informed by research on 'dietary patterns'. Dietary patterns look at whole foods and how they are eaten in combination with other foods, rather than focusing on individual nutrients (e.g. fat and salt). They have been shown to lower the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. This resource will help you to follow the heart healthy eating principles.

The Mediterranean Diet is an example of a healthy dietary pattern that is based on evidence. At the base of the pyramid are foods you should eat most. At the top are foods you should eat in small amounts and less often.



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Heart Healthy Eating Principles

Eat plenty of vegetables, fruits and wholegrain breads and cereals:

- Aim for 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegetables each day.
- Choose wholegrain breads and cereals, such as oats, barley and quinoa as well as wholemeal bread, pasta, rice and couscous. These are high in fibre which is important to support a healthy heart.

Choose unflavoured milk, yoghurt and cheese:

- If you have high blood cholesterol, choose reduced fat dairy.

Include healthy fats and oils:

- These include nuts, seeds, avocados, olives and their oils for cooking.
- When using olive oil for dressing or cooking, choose extra virgin.
- Avoid animal fats and coconut products.



Eat a range of healthy protein-rich foods, including fish, seafood, legumes, eggs and lean chicken:

- Include plant-based proteins (e.g. beans and legumes). Try including these in at least 2-3 meals per week.
- Include fish and seafood more often. Aim for 2-3 serves per week.
- Limit red meat to 1-3 meals per week.
- Avoid processed/deli meats, including bacon, ham, salami and sausages.

Use herbs and spices to flavour foods instead of salt:

- Most salt in our diet comes from packaged and processed foods so include fresh foods most of the time.
- Avoid adding salt to meals when cooking or at the dinner table.

Make water your main drink of choice

- Avoid sugary drinks such as softdrinks, cordial and fruit juice.
- If you choose to drink alcohol, the Australian Guidelines recommend no more than 10 standard drinks per week and no more than 4 standard drinks on any one day. The less you drink the lower your risk of harm from alcohol.

Self-monitoring Checklist

By eating in line with the heart healthy eating principles you can improve your overall heart disease risk. Use the following checklist to see where you can make improvements to your current diet.

Please tick the answer which best reflects your current intake. If you answer 'no' or 'sometimes' to a question, this might be a good place to start to make a change.

	Yes	Sometimes	No
1. Am I eating 5 serves of vegetables every day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Am I eating 2 serves of fruit every day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Of the grain foods, am I having mostly wholegrain breads and cereals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Am I limiting red meat intake to 1-3 times per week? (<i>less than 350g per week</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Am I including plant-based proteins (such as beans and legumes) 2-3 times per week?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Am I including fish and seafood 2-3 times per week?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Am I using herbs and spices to flavour my meals instead of adding salt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Am I mostly drinking water, unsweetened tea, coffee or sugar free drinks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Am I limiting extras or discretionary foods to small amounts (no more than a few times per week)? <i>These include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takeaway foods • Cakes, muffins, pastries, pies, biscuits, chocolate and lollies • Processed/deli meats (salami, ham, bacon, sausages) • Savoury snacks such as potato chips 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Am I including healthy fats and oils daily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Am I reducing alcohol intake to align with the Australian Guidelines?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Motivations

When making changes in your life it can be helpful to identify what is motivating you to make these changes.

Why is it important for you to improve your heart health?

Goals

Setting goals can support you towards long term heart healthy changes.

What is a goal that you would like to work towards? Make sure your goal is SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely).

For example, if you are currently eating 2 serves of vegetables per day, instead of aiming to 'eat more vegetables', your goal may be to 'increase my vegetables at dinner by 2 serves per day'. Another example of a SMART goal could be to 'consume 2 serves of fruit per day'.

What is a goal that you would like to work towards:

For more information about eating for a healthy heart, you can visit the Heart Foundation website: <https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/heart-health-education/healthy-eating>

If you wish to learn more about the Mediterranean dietary pattern and an example meal plan, please see the NEMO Mediterranean Diet Resource:

https://www.health.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0032/946049/cardiac-meddiet.pdf

For further information contact your Dietitian or Nutritionist:
