

Ketogenic Mediterranean Diet™

Version 1.01 8-30-09
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This is a very low carb diet—20 to 40 grams of digestible carbohydrate daily—designed for loss of excess body fat.

Here's what you'll eat:

- 1) Unlimited fish, meat, chicken, turkey, eggs, shrimp, lobster
- 2) Fish, at least 4 oz daily; ideally half of all animal protein
- 3) Olive oil, virgin or extra-virgin, at least 2-3 tbsp (30-45 ml) daily
- 4) Nuts and seeds, 1 oz (28 g) daily
- 5) Vegetables, up to 14 oz (400 g) daily
- 6) Wine, 6-12 fl oz (180-360 ml) daily (see alternatives in Miscellaneous Comments)
- 7) Cheese, up to 3 oz daily, not mandatory
- 8) Supplements: Vitamin D 1000 IU and a general multivitamin including vitamin C daily

What makes it **Mediterranean**? Natural whole foods, fish, olive oil, nuts, wine, cheese.

What's not Mediterranean? Unlimited meat and animal proteins, and absence of fruit, high-carbohydrate vegetables, grains, legumes, pasta, honey, and yogurt. These come later.

Food Category Comments:

1. Protein Group (fish, meat, chicken, turkey, eggs, shrimp, lobster)

Try to avoid overly processed protein products; aim for pure and simple. Processed meats may have added carbohydrates, nitrates, and other chemicals you don't need. Canned products are OK.

2. Fish

Aim for half of your protein intake from fish. Canned fish may be more affordable. Cold-water fatty fish have more omega-3 fatty acids: trout, salmon, sardines, mackerel, albacore/white tuna, herring, swordfish, halibut, sea bass.

3. Olive oil

Use in vinaigrette salad dressing. Sauté with it. Fry eggs and steak with it. Drink it straight if you want!

4. Nuts and seeds

Almonds, walnuts, pecans, Brazil nuts, hazelnuts (filberts), macadamia nuts, peanuts (a legume), Spanish peanuts, pistachios, pine nuts, sunflower seeds. These average 3 g of digestible carbohydrate per ounce (28 g). Sunflower seeds, peanuts, and pistachios are the highest-carb: 3.5 to 4 g per ounce (28 g). No cashews.

5. Vegetables

A) Raw salad vegetables: lettuce, mushrooms, radishes, spinach, alfalfa sprouts, cucumber, tomato, scallions, parsley, jicama, arugula, endive, radicchio, chard, sweet peppers, avocado, olives (pickled green or ripe black). Average digestible carbohydrate per 7 oz serving (200 g) is 5 g. The highest digestible carb counts are in scallions and jicama (8 g), and sweet peppers (7g).

B) Solid vegetables, often cooked: snow peas, broccoli, summer squash, tomato, onion, cauliflower, eggplant, Brussels sprouts, asparagus, okra, sauerkraut (canned), green beans. These average 8 g of digestible carbohydrate per 7 oz serving (200 g). Onion is highest at 14 g. Weigh these before cooking.

6. Wine

Red wine (e.g., Burgundy, Cabernet Sauvignon, or Merlot) may be healthier than white (e.g., Sauvignon blanc, Riesling, Pinot Grigio). One fl oz (30 ml) of wine has 1 g of carbohydrate.

7. Cheese

Real, regular cheese; not low-fat. Mozzarella, provolone, swiss, cheddar, blue, Monterey, Colby, brie, Parmesan, feta, gouda, ricotta, cottage. These have 1 g carbohydrate per oz (28 g).

Miscellaneous Comments:

Warning

Wine contains alcohol, which is dangerous. You should not drink wine if you have a history of alcohol abuse or alcoholism, have liver or pancreas disease, are pregnant or trying to become pregnant, may have the need to operate dangerous equipment or machinery—such as driving a car—while under the influence of alcohol, or have a demonstrated inability to limit yourself to acceptable intake levels.

Alternatives to wine

1. Extra 200 g (7 oz) vegetables plus grape extract supplement daily, **or**
2. 20 g (0.7 oz) of dark chocolate (65-85% cacao) daily

Additional oils and spices (unlimited unless noted):

butter, plant oils (strongly favor olive oil), vinegar (cider, red wine, or distilled, but not balsamic), salt, pepper, genuine mayonnaise, yellow mustard (1 tbsp daily), prominent Mediterranean spices: paprika, cumin, turmeric, cinnamon, ginger (limit 10 g raw root or 2 tsp ground spice daily), coriander, anise, Spanish saffron, lemon or lime juice (limit 2 tbsp daily), mint, parsley, garlic (limit 3 cloves daily), dill pepper, and sumac.

Don't just eat the same four or five items—aim for great variety. You'll be eating lots of salad. Use olive oil to sauté and as salad dressing. Sauté also with butter. Drink at least three liters of water daily.

Low-carb ketogenic diets have been associated with headaches, bad breath, easy bruising, nausea, fatigue, and dizziness, among other symptoms.

Low-carb ketogenic diets may have the potential to cause osteoporosis (thin, brittle bones), kidney stones, low blood pressure, constipation, gout, high uric acid in the blood, excessive loss of sodium and potassium in the urine, worsening of kidney disease, deficiency of calcium and vitamins A, B, C, and D, among other adverse effects.