
mediterranean diet

Posted by Dave Smith - 2008/11/19 08:55

I haven't read about the research described here in any detail, but this article from the Telegraph website may be of interest given recent discussion in this newsgroup: A Mediterranean style diet significantly reduces the risk of dying from heart disease and cancer, according to a comprehensive new study. By Kate Devlin, Medical Correspondent Eating like the Italians or the Greeks can also substantially reduce the risk of developing neurological conditions like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. Scientists analysed the results of 12 major published studies involving more than 1.5 million people. They found that those who stuck closely to a diet rich in olive oil, grains, fish, fruit and vegetables, with low amounts of meat, dairy products and alcohol, were nine per cent less likely to die of heart disease, one of Britain's biggest killers. The chance of developing all types of cancer was six per cent lower, the researchers found, while the likelihood of being diagnosed with Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease was reduced by 13 per cent. Over the course of all the studies, some of which lasted 18 years, those who ate a Mediterranean diet were also nine per cent less likely to die overall, the study, published on bmj.com, the online version of the British Medical Journal, found. The authors of the review, from the University of Florence, in Italy, believe that compiling a score which calculates how strictly diets adhere to the model could be used to predict if patients are in danger of dying prematurely. Previous research has suggested that the good fat in olive oil can help the heart while the diet contains low amounts of bad fats, which can clog arteries and lead to heart attacks. Vegetables and fruits are also rich in antioxidants such as vitamin E and vitamin C, which scientists believe could help to ward off the onset of Alzheimer's disease. Experts also believe that parts of the diet could also have a protective function against cancer. All of the studies the scientists looked at used a numerical score to estimate how closely participants stuck to the diet, and the dramatic results were seen in those who followed it strictly. The findings suggest that the reliance on processed foods rather than fresh fish, meat, fruit and vegetables that characterises the modern diets of millions of people may be shortening people's life spans. Francesco Sofi, who led the study, warned: Unfortunately, despite the worldwide promotion of the Mediterranean diet, a progressive shift to a non-Mediterranean dietary pattern, even in countries bordering the Mediterranean sea, has progressively developed. Prof Martin Wiseman, from the World Cancer Research Fund, said: In terms of diet, people concerned about cancer should aim to eat plenty of wholegrains, fruits and vegetables and limit their intake of red meat, salt and energy dense foods and the Mediterranean diet does follow this approach to healthy eating. Earlier this year a study suggested that eating a Mediterranean diet could cut the rate of death from cancer by 24 per cent. Maintaining a healthy diet has been linked to lowering the risk for a number of cancers including breast cancer and cancers of the bowel, stomach and mouth. The Mediterranean diet has also been linked to a lower risk of other conditions. Last year scientists claimed that eating a Mediterranean diet could help to prevent children from developing asthma and respiratory allergies. Mediterranean diet plan - the foods to eat Vegetables like tomatoes, red peppers, aubergines and courgettes (five portions of fruit and vegetables a day) Fruits including plums, peaches, citrus, melon, (five portions of fruit and vegetables a day) Oily fish like Sardines (one portion a week) Nuts like walnuts (a handful daily) Olives Olive oil and rapeseed oil Pulses and beans such as lentils and borlotti beans Seeds like sunflower, pumpkin Whole-grain bread and pasta and potatoes Green salad leaves

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Posted by mark.wri...@bristol.ac.uk - 2008/11/19 08:55

: A Mediterranean style diet significantly reduces the risk of dying : from heart disease and cancer, according to a comprehensive new : study. Few would doubt the common sense view that the average Mediterranean diet is more healthy than the average UK diet. But what I do worry about is whether, when comparing national diets, other factors are included. E.g. it is so much easier to be active (i.e. get outdoors) in the Med, because of the wonderful weather. Likewise people's mental state is lifted by good weather and climate. Let's not forget that the UK and Ireland have the most miserable weather in Europe... : Over the course of all the studies, some of which lasted 18 years, : those who ate a Mediterranean diet were also nine per cent less likely : to die overall, the study, published on bmj.com, the online version of : the British Medical Journal, found. 9% less likely to die? Wow! There was me thinking we were all going to die. Does this make them 9% immortal? ;-): The Mediterranean diet has also been linked to a lower risk of other : conditions. Last year scientists claimed that eating a Mediterranean : diet could help to prevent children from developing asthma and : respiratory allergies. More likely to be from having good airflow through homes - again because the weather is drier and pleasant so windows can be kept open. In some parts of the Med they dont even have glass! Amazing... Finally, important to note the Med diet is not vegetarian. Mark

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Posted by Peter Brooks - 2008/11/19 08:55

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nine per cent less likely : to die overall, the study, published on bmj.com, the online version of : the British Medical Journal, found. 9% less likely to die? Wow! There was me thinking we were all going to die. Does this make them 9% immortal? ;-)

Either that or they're less likely to die in their overalls.

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Finally, important to note the Med diet is not vegetarian. Subjects were given an 'adherence to Mediterranean diet' score: Adherence to a Mediterranean diet was defined through scores that estimated the conformity of the dietary pattern of the studied population with the traditional Mediterranean dietary pattern. Values of zero or one were assigned to each dietary component by using as cut offs the overall sex specific medians among the study participants. Specifically, people whose consumption of components considered to be part of a Mediterranean diet (vegetables, fruits, legumes, cereals, fish, and a moderate intake of red wine during meals) was above the median consumption of the population were assigned a value of one, whereas a value of zero was given to those with consumptions below the median. By contrast, people whose consumption of components presumed not to form part of a Mediterranean diet (red and processed meats, dairy products) was above the median consumption of the population had a value of zero assigned, and the others had a value of one. However, some differences among the studies existed, especially in relation to the food category of vegetables (grouped with potatoes in one studyw5), meat and meat products (grouped with poultry in some studiesw4 w6), and nuts and seeds (grouped with fruits in some studies,w4 w6 w7 w12 with legumes in one study,w5 and considered a group by themselves in some othersw8 w10 w11), as well as milk and dairy products (not present in some studiesw8 w10 w11) and fish (present only in more recent studiesw4-w12). Thus, the total adherence scores (estimated as the sum of the above indicated scores of zero and one) varied from a minimum of 0 points indicating low adherence to a maximum of 7-9 points reflecting high adherence to a Mediterranean diet. A reasonably full account of the research can be obtained from the British Medical Journal online site. Dave

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