

Menopause and diet:

Mediterranean diet

The Mediterranean diet (MedDiet) is a plant-dominant dietary pattern low in saturated fats prevailing in the olive-growing areas of the Mediterranean basin. It is associated with improved mood, better weight control, enhanced cardiovascular health and lower cholesterol levels.

Components of the MedDiet

- Fruit and vegetables
- Breads and cereals
- Beans and seeds
- Olive oil and nuts
- Dairy products (principally cheese and yogurt)
- Eggs and fish
- Some meat, usually poultry (chicken), rabbit, lamb or goat
- Low to moderate wine intake with meals

The MedDiet is not based on dietary restriction but reflects the usual dietary pattern of diverse cultures.

Benefits of the MedDiet

Long-term benefits

In peri- and postmenopausal women, long-term high adherence may:

- Reduce **cardiovascular risk**
- Reduce the incidence of cardiovascular events and death
- Maintain **bone health**
- Lead to a more favorable body composition
- Improve bone mineral density in women with **osteoporosis**
- Help to prevent **cognitive decline**
- Reduce the risk of breast cancer
- Reduce the risk of all-cause mortality

Short-term benefits

In peri- and postmenopausal women, short-term high adherence may:

- Improve **hot flashes** and **night sweats**
- Improve **blood** pressure, cholesterol, and blood glucose levels
- Improve **mood** and symptoms of depression

Further information

EMAS (2020). Position statement. The Mediterranean diet and menopausal health [https://www.maturitas.org/article/S0378-5122\(20\)30325-X/fulltext](https://www.maturitas.org/article/S0378-5122(20)30325-X/fulltext)

Gonçalves et al. (2024). Systematic review of Mediterranean diet interventions in menopausal women <https://doi.org/10.3934/publichealth.2024005>

International Menopause Society (2025). Factsheet 1. Healthy eating in midlife and menopause <https://www.imsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/WMD-2025-Factsheet-Healthy-Eating.pdf>