



## Dr. Nuchovich's Florida Mediterranean Diet

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The classic Mediterranean Diet is designed to improve health and decrease the rate of medical disorders, particularly arteriosclerosis, coronary heart disease, obesity, intellectual decline, glucose intolerance, Diabetes, arthritis, vascular disease, digestive diseases and inflammatory conditions. It's even appropriate for preventing and managing mental decline. This diet also offers a beneficial effect in the relief of osteoarthritis, joint inflammation and many painful conditions and is beneficial for the healing of injuries, traumas and surgery. Injuries, whether from a car accident, surgery or trauma, heal better and faster when following the Mediterranean Diet. Sports injuries heal faster too, which is why many trainers use it to treat injured athletes. Painful conditions such as neck, back and joint pain improve significantly as well.

This diet has a powerful anti-inflammatory effect, which has a positive impact on the treatment of inflammatory conditions of muscles, tendons and ligaments. It even improves fatigue and psychological disorders such as anxiety and depression. Additionally, this diet has a dramatic effect on joints, preventing arthritis, and if a person is already suffering from arthritic conditions, it promotes healing and decreases inflammation of the affected joints.

The cardiovascular advantage is well known: Mediterranean diet improves heart disease, lowers blood pressure and it is known to prevent atherosclerosis. It lowers overall cholesterol levels, raises levels of HDL (high-density lipoprotein), which is the good cholesterol that provides cardiovascular protection, lowers levels of LDL (low-density lipoprotein), which is the bad cholesterol that causes heart and vascular disease, reduces the oxidation of LDL, making it less prone to harden the arteries (atherogenic).

I explain it all with much more detail in my book. You can call this diet an omega-3 lifestyle, encouraging you to stay away from the adverse omega-6 lifestyle. Don't Be Misled by the magazines you see in supermarkets, enticing you to believe in their false recipes to which they have falsely given Mediterranean names. A Mediterranean name does NOT make a dish healthy.

The main features of the classic Mediterranean Diet are well known, however certain modifications are needed in order to adapt it to our Florida and US environment.

### The important aspects of the Florida Mediterranean Diet are:

#### The classic Ingredients:

High consumption of good fat from fish (especially oily fish), nuts and olive oil, combined with intake of fresh raw vegetables, beans, rice, garlic, fresh herbs and fresh fruits. Low consumption of low-fat cheeses and yogurts (which are used mainly as condiments). Fish, poultry and eggs used as the main protein. Beef on occasions and preferably organic. Shellfish sometimes. Pork on rare occasions. Turkey: no. Nuts and fresh fruits are a typical daily dessert. Moderate consumption of wine, especially red wine (to be taken with meals). Olives and nuts for appetizers and snacks.

However, that is not enough, so I designed a better version of it. One of the reasons is that a very precise Greek or Sicilian style Mediterranean

diet is not that easy to do here in Florida and most of the USA, hence the need for a modification, as you will see soon. A key issue in my dietary program is that I also recommend nutritional supplements and vitamins to enhance the healing effect of the Mediterranean Diet, decrease inflammation and arthritis, and promote repair and healing from multiple conditions as well as pain relief. The reason for this is that omega-3 foods are not always readily available and the raw fruits and veggies we may buy don't always contain all the vitamins and minerals we need. Since consumption of omega-3 is extremely important, I usually recommend purified concentrated fish oil since it is more effective and patients have to take less capsules. Therefore, I use in my program only selected brands of very purified concentrated fish oil and of excellent brand of multivitamins, both from laboratories recognized by the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine. They are not cheap and they are not available in health food stores, but these are the ones I take and the ones my family and most of my patients take. Sorry, but after learning about how over the counter and health food stores vitamins and supplements can be contaminated with chemicals and toxins, I don't recommend any other brands.

#### Key Factors:

One of the key factors of my Florida Mediterranean Diet is the emphasis on the concept that your health and your best preventive efforts depend on the health of your bowel. Down there, in your own intestines, is where the present and the future of your health is decided, and right there is where the combination of anti-oxidants and omega-3 fats will exert their magnificent actions in promoting your good health. This diet is your best tool for this to happen.

Remember: Poor gut health is at the heart of many chronic diseases and a healthy gastrointestinal (GI) tract is vital to good health. That is the goal of my program. The heart of the matter is that your food should be a mixture of nutrients, vitamins, raw fiber, protein, anti-oxidants and omega-3 when it reaches your bowel. That will not happen with burger & fries, or with turkey and fried veggies, or with many of the foods of the SAD (Standard American Diet).

Free radicals and omega-6 are bad, but anti-oxidants and omega-3 are good and neutralize them. The effect of the omega-3 fats and the anti-oxidants/ free-radical balance is perhaps the most important factor of the Mediterranean Diet and the one that provides the greatest health benefit. High intake of omega-3 fatty acids from fish, vegetables

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Received: 06-Jun-2022, Manuscript No. snt-22-70550; Editor assigned: 08-Jun-2022, PreQC No. snt-22-70550(PQ); Reviewed: 22-Jun-2022, QC No. snt-22-70550; Revised: 27-Jun-2022, Manuscript No. snt- snt-22-70550(R); Published: 04-July-2022, DOI: 10.4172/snt.1000170

Citation: Nuchovich D (2022) Dr. Nuchovich's Florida Mediterranean Diet. J Nutr Sci Res 7: 170.

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and nuts, coupled with the consumption of powerful antioxidants from herbs, fruits, wine and vegetables places people in an omega-3 /antioxidant state, which provides tremendous health benefits, unlike the omega-6/free-radical state of the American diet, which is toxic, extremely inflammatory and disease-causing. Indeed, when well done, my Florida Mediterranean alkalized Diet places the individual in a very particular healing state that I call with a complicated name: The "omega-3/anti-inflammatory/good-eicosanoids/anti-oxidant state", explained in my book, and this is where you want to be every day.

#### Eicosanoids:

Eicosanoids are molecules derived from fatty particles. They operate inside the gut, controlling the intensity of the inflammation that is usually present during digestion. As an example, high activity of pro-inflammatory eicosanoids will cause a lot of free radicals and will lead the gut to inflammation. You don't want that. In contrast, proper activity of anti-inflammatory eicosanoids combined with low activity of the bad ones will lead the gut, and its bacterial flora, to a peaceful state. That's what you want.

#### Dysbiosis:

When the intestine is overwhelmed by bad inflammatory eicosanoids, food particles and inflammation disrupt the bacterial flora, breaking its harmony and allowing harmful bacteria to overpopulate. This situation is called dysbiosis and it's not good. Intense dysbiosis, often silent, causes weight gain and diseases of all kind. But wait, it gets worse.

When the gut is affected by bad eicosanoids, dysbiosis, inflammation and the consequent toxins buildup, it develops a Silent Bowel Illness (SBI), which allows toxic-inflammatory particles to spread from the gut to the rest of the body and is the trigger of a multitude of diseases. Therefore, this is our goal, to overcome, decrease and avoid SBI. The goal is not to satisfy the taste buds or to seek enjoyment from all the wrong foods, but to be healthy. The main factor generating good or bad eicosanoids and promoting or not dysbiosis is the food you eat. Sounds complicated, I know, but it will get easier to understand as you read more.

Therefore, eating the way you shouldn't, consuming all the wrong foods, (which are those entire not in my list), will place you in the very adverse "omega-6/pro-inflammatory/bad-eicosanoids/free-radical state", which results in SBI. You don't want to be there, since that is the land of diseases.

**Some examples of those wrong foods, and foods to avoid are:** pasta dishes, pizza, milk, cheeses, cookies, cereal, fatty cold cuts, subs, fast food, frozen dinners, sugary sodas and juices, hot dogs, pastry, cakes, most breads, beer, bottled salad dressings, sweets, most Mexican, Cuban and Caribbean dishes, hash browns, cheeseburger, many restaurant dishes, corned beef, sausages, syrups, bagel & cream cheese, mac & cheese, pancakes, bacon, corn chips with salsa. Yes, I know, many people eat that way and they are slim and never get sick, but are you willing to push your luck?

This is an extremely important point, and I strongly emphasize it. It is not enough to eat right; you need to avoid the bad stuff. Bad food will neutralize and even reverse the benefits of my Mediterranean diet.

In our Florida Mediterranean Diet we recommend the main features of Mediterranean Diet (as I described above) and more:

➤ Olive oil – gets only high quality and consumes it every time you eat, from the bottle to your food. Do this several times a day

➤ Olives – have them near you, green or black, and consume them anytime.

➤ Red wine – 1 glass or two a day, preferably Pinot Noir or Cabernet Sauvignon, during your meal. Not hours before or after, but during your meal. It is important that the antioxidants of the wine mix with your food in the gut, providing a beneficial antioxidant environment.

➤ Natural Antioxidants – One of the highlights of our Mediterranean Diet is its high content of natural antioxidants, which provide well known health benefits. They neutralize toxic free radicals, which are molecules that cause inflammation and damage in our tissues. The sources of these nutrients are fresh raw vegetables of different colors (the more variety of colors the better) and fresh raw fruits.

➤ As I wrote above, right amount of vitamins, minerals and anti-oxidants are lacking in our food supply. Therefore we recommend and use Medi-Naturals, 2 capsules in am, or 2 capsules in am and one at supper time.

➤ Also fresh raw herbs (like basil, bay leaves, chives, cilantro, dill, fennel, garlic, marjoram, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage, thyme, tarragon and others) will bring you fresh antioxidants. I encourage using them daily. You can get them at the supermarket or in pots at garden stores. Learn to add them to your meals.

➤ Get your calories from legumes (lentils, beans, chickpeas, peas), and also from rice (any rice). Sweet potato. No corn.

➤ Protein sources: fish (raw, canned or buy fresh). No tuna, swordfish, catfish, shark or pangasus. Avoid farmed fish or lake fish. Chicken (preferably organic). No turkey. Beef and veal 2-3 times a week (organic if possible, and omeganized). Venison, organic buffalo and eggs: OK. Pork preferably not, but if you do, do in moderation. Ham, lean, of good brands, in moderation. No salame or bologna. No sausage or imported meats or cold cuts. No canned meats. Lamb and goat OK if lean and you know where they are from. Tofu OK if from the US and you can have soy (however, new information suggests we should all avoid it). Most important, and I emphasize, 'alkalinize and omeganize' your protein.

#### How to omeganize your meal:

a) Consume your meal with olive oil and take some fish oil, 1-2 capsules, at that time

b) Don't fry your food or eat fried food (especially if it is from a take-out, fast-food or restaurant) – you can sauté with low heat olive oil

c) Add nuts to your salad, snacks or dishes (but not peanuts)

d) Make your meals simple (no pots, goulash, casseroles, chili con carne, mac-and-cheese, etc. – ideal meal is raw veggies, grains and lean protein)

e) Complement your meals with Medi-Naturals, 2-3 capsules a day, or Detox-Vitamins; 1-2 capsules a day, and the Super-Omega Fish Oil, which are essential ingredients of my program

f) If you can tolerate, consume more often sardines, salmon, cod, anchovies, mackerel, omega-3 eggs, seaweed, but check their origin

g) if you like it (I don't) you can grind fresh flaxseeds over your salad in addition

h) If your bowels have any kind of inflammation or abnormality, add Vital-Turmeric, 1 capsule a day, (a powerful antioxidant that

supports joint health, liver health, digestive health, circulation and healthy aging). It contains compounds with medicinal properties which provide a powerful anti-inflammatory effect. Strongly recommended

i) berries, dark fruits and veggies. Most plants and vegetables contain chemical compounds that exert some action in the human body when consumed. We call those chemicals phytochemicals, and they are found in the pigment that provide the color to the fruits and vegetables, and they carry strong antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. The power of these foods come from their capacity to neutralize the damaging effect of free radicals, therefore they are cell protectors. They have a strong beneficial effect in disease prevention, brain and heart health, anti-aging, telomere lengthening, controlling diabetes and even cancer prevention. Consume them often, mix them with your salads, and use them as snack or dessert.

Sounds a bit complicated, I know, but start slow, advance and step by step make a routine out of it.

**Most Powerful Beneficial Phytochemicals:** black raspberries, black currants, blueberries, blackberries, red cabbage, dark plums, turmeric, red grapes, raspberries, acai berry, cherries, maqui berry, fresh raw herbs, pomegranate, cinnamon, goji berry, amla (gooseberry). Also orange, wolfberries, strawberries, most raw fruits, kale, broccoli and mangos teen adding beneficial phytochemicals to your meals is an excellent idea.

As important as the foods you eat, a very important factor is the foods don't eat. Even if you eat good food, bad foods will ruin its beneficial effects.

Florida Mediterranean diet is not about eating hummus, tahine, couscous, falafel, and tzatziki and baba ganoush. That concept is wrong. Those foods are many times too processed and genetically speaking they might not be right for you. You can have your burger and your pork if you follow the guidelines and this diet is not about being vegan, vegetarian, or eating fat free or low fat. Those are wrong concepts too. Read on.

#### Why "Florida" Mediterranean Diet?

Well, to begin with, Mediterranean people don't have much idea of the whole concept of "a good Mediterranean diet". They eat this way because that is the food around them and that is the way they were raised. They don't need to learn it. However, here in Florida and in the

whole US, people are surrounded by a huge variety of bad foods (with adverse metabolic effects), most were not raised 'the Mediterranean way' and have not been instructed on 'Mediterranean-way-of-eating'. Moreover, people are constantly bombarded by food marketing, and if this was not enough, diet and nutrition websites, books and magazines overwhelm the consumers with excessive, and often wrong, information. Hence they need to learn it and practice it right.

#### What is the difference between my Florida diet and the original one?

- a) The emphasis on understanding its ingredients
- b) The knowledge of what you are doing, and what you are not doing
- c) Instead of a passive acceptance of the foods that surround you, you have to have an active attitude of selecting your foods to improve your health
- d) Your active attitude of refusing to eat any of the bad foods of your environment
- e) Understanding the difference between the 'omega-3/anti-inflammatory/good-eicosanoids/anti-oxidant' dietary lifestyle (which I strongly recommend) and the bad one I mentioned above. I dedicated an entire chapter of my book to that. This is because as important as it is what YOU EAT, it is also very important what YOU DON'T EAT. If you want, to make it easier, we can call them the good omega-3 lifestyle and the bad omega-6 lifestyle
- f) Because there are food options over there that we don't have here, and we have options here not available over there
- g) The understanding of the need to "omeganize" our meals: having olive oil and fish oil with our meals.

Help your gut. Even if we do things right, we are still exposed to chemicals and toxins in food, water and environment, and this WILL affect our sugar control and our weight, therefore we need a little extra help to keep our gut healthy. That help comes from specific powdered functional foods. After trying many of these products, I found the most effective ones to be: the ones from Metagenics (Ultra-Clear), Thorne Research (Medi-Clear) Ortho-Molecular (CORE support and Inflammatory) and Zymogens' (Opti-Cleanse GHI).