



FOOD TO HEAL • 003

Mediterranean Diet

Support your gut health with a
Mediterranean-style way of eating

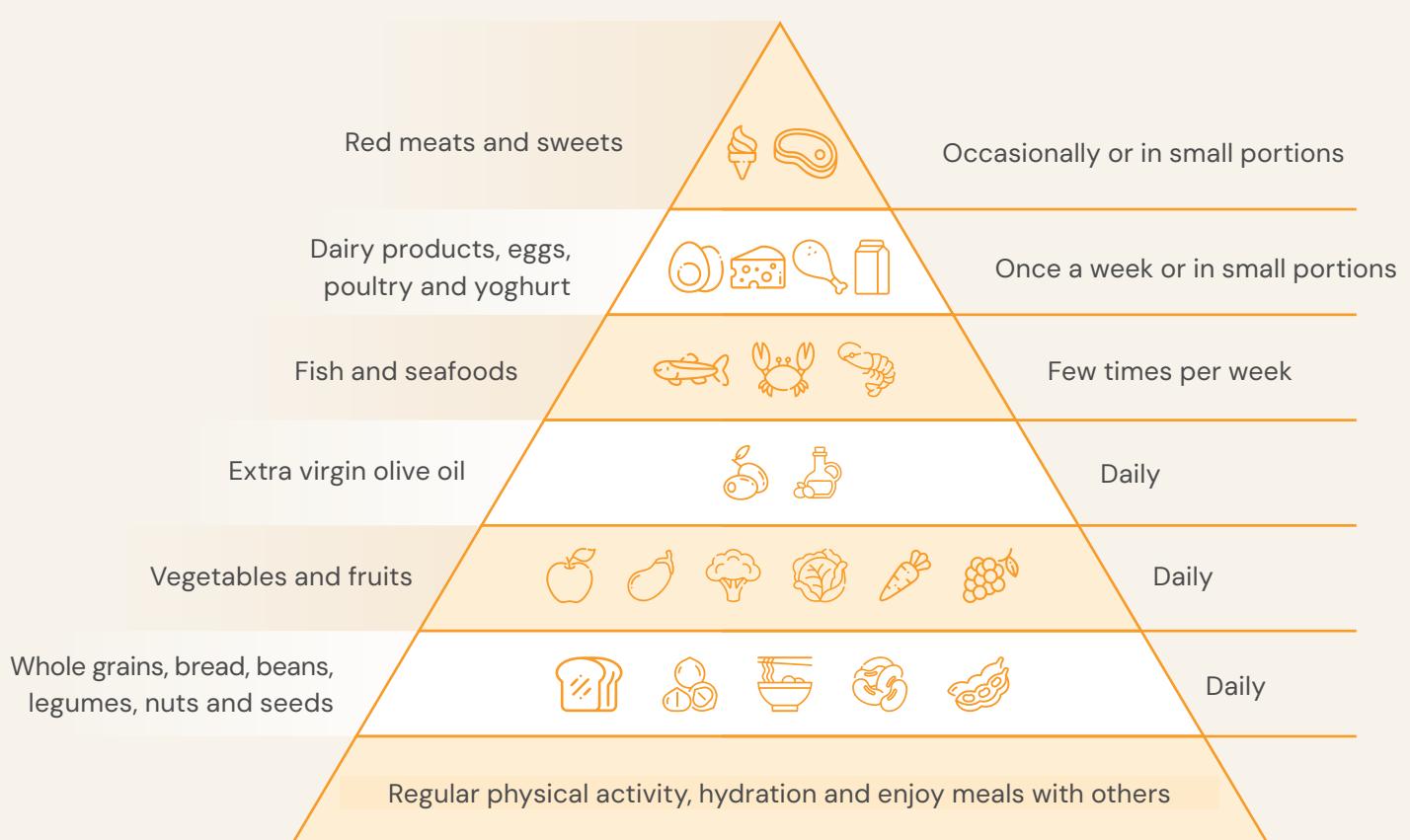


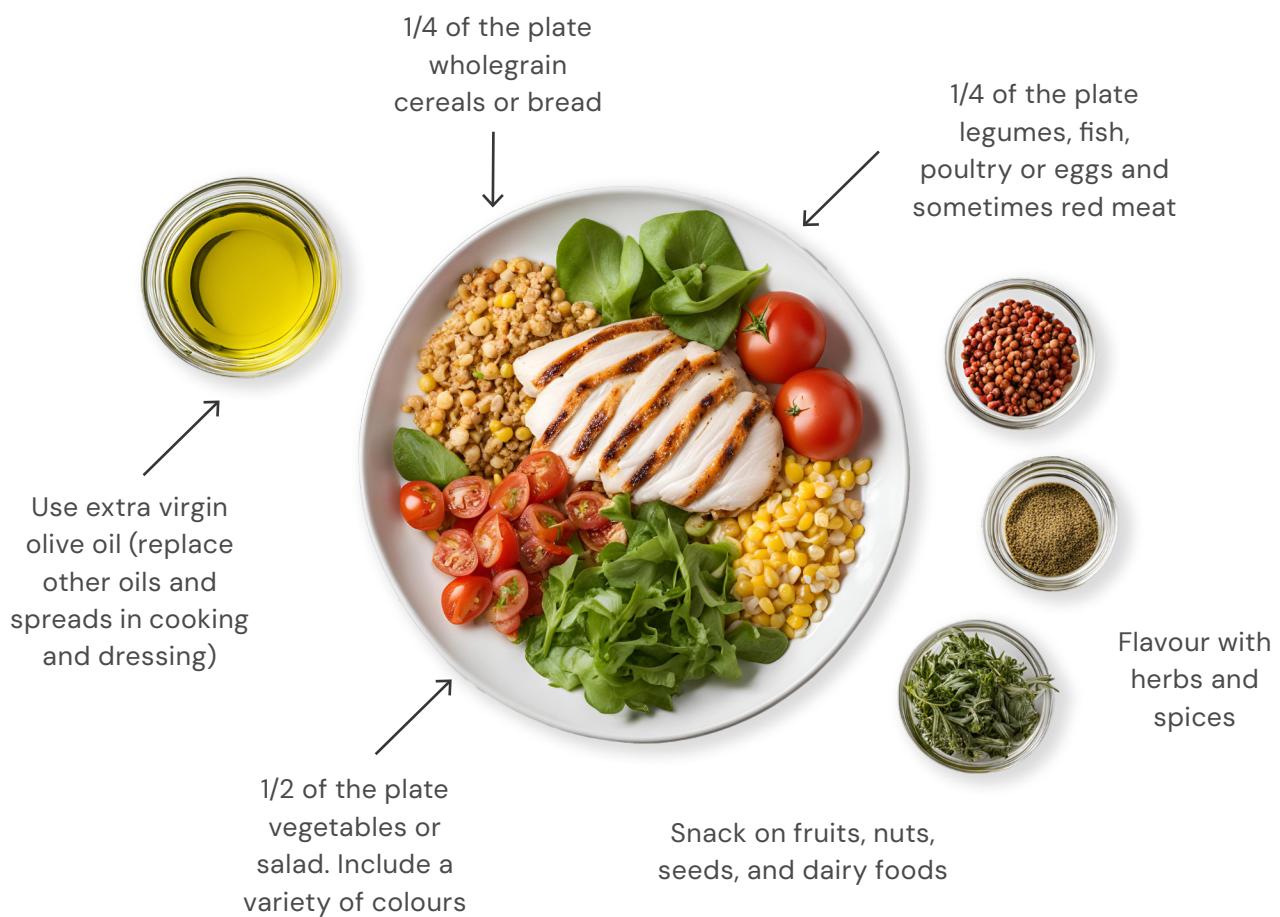
Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean diet (MedDiet) is based on traditional habits of people living in the Mediterranean region. Research suggests it may support cardiovascular health and other long-term conditions. More recently, studies have also found that this way of eating supports a healthy gut environment, which can help nourish the microbiome.

The MedDiet is characterised by building your meals around plant-based foods, with lots of variety and colour:

Wholegrain cereals	1-2 serves every meal
Vegetables	≥ 2 serves every meal
Fruits	2 serves daily
Nuts and seeds	≥ 3 serves weekly
Legumes / beans	3 serves weekly
Extra virgin olive oil	4 tbsp daily (spread out over each meal)
Dairy products	Fermented dairy (e.g. cheese, yoghurt): 2 serves daily Other full fat dairy: 1-2 serves weekly
Fish/ seafood e.g. salmon, mackerel, tuna, sardines, herring	≥ 2 serves weekly
Poultry	1-2 serves weekly
Eggs	1-2 serves weekly
Red and processed meat	< 2 serves weekly
Sweets / treat foods	< 2 serves weekly





Meal Ideas

Breakfast:

- Plain yoghurt with nuts, seeds, untoasted muesli, and fresh fruit
- Rolled oats with plant-based milk, linseeds, chia seeds, and fresh berries
- Wholemeal sourdough bread with ricotta cheese and a light drizzle of extra virgin olive oil or honey
- Whole-grain tortilla with hummus, sliced cucumbers, tomatoes, olives, and feta cheese (finish with extra virgin olive oil)

Lunch:

- Mediterranean salad choice of legume (chickpeas/five bean mix) with your choice of legumes (e.g. chickpeas or five-bean mix) and an extra virgin olive oil dressing
- Wholemeal wrap with salad and tinned tuna or sardines in extra virgin olive oil

- Legume pasta with grilled chicken, capsicum, zucchini and napolitana (tomato) sauce (extra virgin olive oil base)

Dinner:

- Grilled salmon cooked with extra virgin olive oil, wholegrain brown rice, and vegetables
- Vegetable and lentil soup with barley with wholegrain bread on the side (finish with a swirl of extra virgin olive oil)
- Chicken and vegetable stir-fry cooked with extra virgin olive oil with brown basmati rice

Snacks:

- Handful (30g) of unsalted mixed nuts
- Fresh fruit
- Vegetable sticks with hummus or tzatziki
- Wholemeal crackers with avocado

Recipe ideas

Mediterranean salad (2 serves)

Ingredients:

For the salad

- 1 can of chickpeas, drained, and rinsed
- 1 Lebanese cucumber
- 2 large tomato

- 1 red capsicum
- $\frac{1}{2}$ red onion
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of feta cheese



Method:

1. Cut all vegetables and place them into a bowl
2. Add chickpeas to the bowl and mix thoroughly
3. In a separate bowl combine all dressing ingredients and mix

For the dressing

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 tablespoon freshly chopped parsley
- Salt and pepper

4. Add dressing into the vegetables and chickpeas bowl and toss until well coated
5. Sprinkle the salad with crumbled feta cheese
6. Garnish with fresh parsley leaves
7. Enjoy on its own with a slice of wholemeal sourdough bread or as a delicious side dish

Grilled salmon and vegetables (2 serves)

Ingredients:

- 2 salmon fillets
- 1 medium zucchini
- 1 capsicum – colour of your choice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ red onion
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

- 1 lemon
- 1 clove of fresh garlic
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt
- 1 teaspoon of finely cut basil leaves (fresh)



Method:

1. For the marinade, combine minced/finely chopped garlic, lemon juice, extra virgin extra virgin olive oil, salt, and pepper in a bowl
2. Place the salmon fillets in a shallow dish and cover with marinade for 15–20 minutes
3. Pre-heat grill to medium-high
4. Cut all vegetables into cubes in a separate

- bowl and add salt and pepper
5. Thread the vegetables into skewers and cook on grill for approximately 8 minutes
6. Remove salmon from marinade and place on grill alongside the skewers for 5 minutes
7. Serve together and garnish with finely chopped basil leaves. Simple, balanced, and rich in Mediterranean flavours.

Building your meals around Mediterranean-style foods, especially vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts, seeds and extra virgin olive oil, can help nourish beneficial bacteria and support your gut microbiome. Start with small, enjoyable changes and notice how your body responds over time.