ShapeUP Live Well

The Mediterranean Lifestyle

2009
If you’ve ever visited the Mediterranean region, or even if you have seen pictures of it, you have probably noticed that the people seem to enjoy life to the fullest. Natives of the Mediterranean region tend to live to old age and have lower rates of heart disease and cancer. What’s their secret to good health? Much of it is due to a mix of these factors:

- A diet rich in fruit, vegetables, whole grain breads, cereals, and beans and low in red meats and processed sugars
- Daily exercise
- Balance between work and family

You can adopt the Mediterranean lifestyle wherever you live. This calendar provides a year’s worth of health information about the Mediterranean lifestyle and shows you how to add these good habits to your daily routine. By following the tips and recipes on this calendar, you can get on the road to better health.

Be sure to talk to your doctor if you have any questions about this information or if you plan to start a new diet or exercise plan.

Eating a combination of these foods can help you lose or maintain weight. You can also fight diabetes, heart disease, depression and some forms of cancer.

- **Bread, Pasta, Grains:** bread, pasta, rice, couscous, polenta, potatoes
- **Fruits:** olives, avocados, grapes
- **Vegetables:** spinach, eggplant, tomatoes, broccoli, peppers, mushrooms, garlic, capers, beans
- **Legumes, Nuts:** almonds, walnuts and other nuts; chick peas, white beans, lentils and other beans; Peanuts
- **Olive Oil**
- **Cheese & Yogurt**
- **Fish:** shellfish, sardines
- **Poultry:** chicken
- **Eggs**
- **Meat:** veal, lamb (limit to 12-16 ounces per month)
- **Red Wine:** limit to 1 glass a day for women and 2 glasses per day for men.

Find more information about any of these health topics at www.mycarefirst.com
Healthy Weight

Did you gain a few pounds over the holidays? Being overweight can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes, so it’s important to watch what you eat and get plenty of exercise.

Start the year off right by making a plan to eat right and exercise.

If you’re trying to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight, eat a variety of nutritious foods and limit the amount of fat and sugar you eat. Read food labels to be sure you are getting the nutrients your body needs.

Tell your doctor if you want to start a new diet or exercise plan.

Visit our online Weight Management Center at www.carefirst.com/weight.

Healthy Weight Week

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Inauguration Day

Chinese New Year

Find more information about any of these health topics at www.mycarefirst.com
The average American diet is high in fat, which increases the risk of heart disease. Studies of people who eat a diet that is common in the Mediterranean region have shown lower rates of heart disease and some forms of cancer. The Mediterranean diet has a large amount of fruit, vegetables, whole grain breads and cereals, beans, potatoes and seeds. It includes a low to moderate amount of dairy products, such as cheese and yogurt. Olive oil is the main source of fat. Fish and poultry are much more common than red meat. Desserts are usually fruits, and sweets are rare. A glass of wine is common with lunch or dinner. We can’t credit just one part of the Mediterranean diet for providing health benefits; however, experts believe that the high amount of omega-3 fatty acids greatly helps to lower the risk of heart disease.
March 2009

National Nutrition Month

Healthy eating is a key to preventing high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, obesity and many other diseases. For ways to eat better, visit our online Nutrition Center at www.carefirst.com/nutrition.

To make sure you are eating a healthy diet, choose a variety of foods every day. Read food labels to find foods that are low in sugar, salt and fat.

The best way to keep track of what you are eating is to keep a food diary. Use a notebook to write down everything you eat and how much of it you eat each day. Write down where you eat and how you are feeling when you eat. This can help you to discover your eating patterns. If you learn that stress is causing you to overeat or eat unhealthy foods, ask your doctor for better ways to manage stress.

Find more information about any of these health topics at www.mycarefirst.com

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Sorrento, Italy

Find the most nutrition from your food by shopping around the outer edge of the supermarket. That’s where the freshest, most nutritious foods are found: fruit, vegetables, bread, fish, yogurt, milk and nuts. Try not to buy prepackaged foods, which are usually high in sodium and preservatives.
### April 2009

#### Stress

Studies of the Mediterranean region show that people who live longer tend to have strong social support networks. Large, extended families are common there.

It’s important for everybody to have somebody to lean on, whether it’s a friend, family member or other trusted person in your life.

If you are feeling stressed, it’s important to find someone to talk to. By managing stress, you can:

- better control your blood pressure, which lowers your risk of heart disease
- prevent overeating, which helps to control your weight
- sleep better

And that’s what will help you to live a longer and happier life!

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#### Health Tips

- To manage stress, get enough rest, eat balanced meals, set realistic goals, make time for yourself and ask for help from your boss or your family if you need it.
- Look into alternative ways to manage stress, such as yoga, meditation, and guided imagery.

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Find more information about any of these health topics at [www.mycarefirst.com](http://www.mycarefirst.com)
There is a lower rate of high blood pressure in the Mediterranean region. This can be linked to the low-sodium diet and the amount of exercise common to this area. The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has developed the DASH low-sodium diet. It is similar to the Mediterranean diet because it is rich in fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy foods and low in saturated and total fat. It also is low in cholesterol; high in fiber, potassium, calcium, and magnesium; and moderately high in protein. For more information on the DASH diet, visit www.nhlbi.gov and search for DASH diet or call 800-575-WELL.

For more help in managing your blood pressure visit our online Blood Pressure Control Center at www.carefirst.com/bp.

### Blood Pressure Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Category</th>
<th>Systolic</th>
<th>Diastolic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>120 or less</td>
<td>80 or less</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prehypertension</td>
<td>120-139</td>
<td>80-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hypertension</td>
<td>140 or higher</td>
<td>90 or higher</td>
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</table>

### Health Tips

To control your blood pressure:
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Exercise regularly.
- Limit the sodium in your diet. Substitute herbs, spices and no-salt seasonings for salt and high-sodium gravy and sauce mixes.
- Don’t smoke.
- If you take medicine for high blood pressure, know how and when to take it. Don’t stop taking it unless your doctor tells you to stop.

Find more information about any of these health topics at www.mycarefirst.com
Physical Activity

Physical activity plays a major role in the Mediterranean lifestyle. Don’t let modern conveniences like elevators, cars and computers keep you from an active lifestyle.

Just 30 minutes of activity per day is all it takes to stay in shape. If you don’t have time for a full workout, get a boost of energy while getting fit by adding these activities to your daily routine:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.
- Walk, bike or take the bus to wherever you have to go. You’ll save money on gas, too!
- Get off the bus or metro 1 stop ahead of where you need to go and enjoy the walk.

An exercise buddy will help you stick to your routine. It’s more fun to exercise with someone else, and you will help each other to stay motivated. Ask a friend, co-worker or neighbor.

Find more information about any of these health topics at www.mycarefirst.com
Eye Injury Prevention Month
National Therapeutic Recreation Month

Health Tips
- To add more vegetables to your diet, mix grated carrots or zucchini in your pasta sauce and soups.
- Eat from the rainbow. Choosing foods in a variety of colors will help you to get all of the nutrients your body needs. Try colorful fruits and vegetables for a healthy snack.

Cancer Prevention
The American Cancer Society says that you can lower your risk of cancer of the throat, breast and urinary and digestive tracts with:
- daily exercise
- a diet that takes about 40% of its calories from healthy fat and about half from complex carbohydrates

Healthy fats are found in such foods as olive oil, avocados, nuts, and fish. Complex carbohydrates are found in whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

For better health, the American Cancer Society also says you should eat fewer fatty meats, and try not to eat butter and cream. If you must eat butter, look for cholesterol- and fat-free versions and use only small amounts. Use fat-free milk instead of cream.

Find more information about any of these health topics at www.mycarefirst.com
Make an appointment for any needed shots.

When the urge to smoke hits you, try these tips:
- Breathe in deeply and slowly breathe out. Do this 3 times.
- Snack on low-calorie foods like celery, carrots or sugar-free gum.
- If you’re about to pick up a cigarette, wait 10 minutes. By that time, the urge should pass.
- If people around you are smoking, don’t be afraid to ask them to stop.

You Can Quit Smoking

Smoking is the number 1 cause of preventable death in America. Inhaling someone else’s smoke is just as dangerous as smoking yourself.

The good news is that you can reverse the effects of smoking if you quit.

Taking these 5 steps will help you quit smoking for good:
1. Set a date and throw away all smoking materials.
2. Get support from your doctor, family, friends and co-workers. Enroll in a support group.
3. Find new activities to distract yourself from smoking and relieve stress.
4. Get medication and nicotine replacement therapy and use it correctly. Ask your doctor which is best for you.
5. Don’t be around alcohol, other smokers and stressful situations. If you slip, you can always start again.

Find more information about any of these health topics at www.mycarefirst.com

St. Tropez, France
### Health Tips

- **Choose olive oil or canola oil instead of butter or other types of oil.**
- **Olive oil has just as many calories as other oils, so use small amounts.**

### Normal Cholesterol Numbers

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<tr>
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<th>LDL (Bad cholesterol)</th>
<th>HDL (Good cholesterol)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Less than 100 mg/dL</td>
<td>More than 40 mg/dL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>More than 50 mg/dL</td>
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Visit our online Cholesterol Center at [www.carefirst.com/cholesterol](http://www.carefirst.com/cholesterol) for more information on how to control your cholesterol.
Breast Cancer Awareness

Early detection and effective treatment are keys to reducing the number of women who die from breast cancer. If you are a woman aged 40 or older, talk to your doctor about getting a mammogram. It could save your life.

A study of breast cancer survivors in California showed that eating 5-6 servings of fruits and vegetables per day and walking for 30 minutes, 6 days per week may help prevent the disease from returning.

Drinking alcohol puts you at greater risk for breast cancer, so if you want to drink, have only a small amount. Women should not have more than 1 drink per day.

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<th>October 2009</th>
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<td><strong>Health Tips</strong></td>
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<td>• Get your mammogram 1 week after your period, when the breasts are less sensitive. To ensure a clearer reading, do not wear perfume, lotion or powder under your arms or on your breasts on the day of the mammogram.</td>
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<td>• October is the best time to get a flu shot. Older adults and people with chronic illnesses like asthma and diabetes are at greater risk for the flu. Ask your doctor if you should have a flu shot.</td>
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<td><strong>Find more information about any of these health topics at <a href="http://www.mycarefirst.com">www.mycarefirst.com</a></strong></td>
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<td>National Fire Prevention Week</td>
<td>Child Health Day</td>
<td>Talk About Prescriptions Month</td>
<td>Breast Cancer Awareness Month</td>
<td>National Dental Hygiene Month</td>
<td>Health Literacy Month</td>
<td>Domestic Violence Awareness Month</td>
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<td>Drive Safely Week Week</td>
<td>Rosh Hashanah</td>
<td>Columbus Day</td>
<td>October</td>
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<td>National Depression Screening Day</td>
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<td>National Red Ribbon Week</td>
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<td>Marseilles, France</td>
<td>Breast Cancer Awareness</td>
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When you eat better and get daily physical activity, you will see lower blood sugar, insulin, blood pressure and cholesterol readings as well as a healthier weight, increased energy and a better sense of wellbeing.

Visit our online Diabetes Center at www.carefirst.com/diabetes.
**December 2009**

**Athens, Greece**

**Health Tips**

If you are taking medication for depression, follow these tips:
- Take your medication as prescribed. It may take several weeks for you to feel better.
- If you have side effects from your medication, call your doctor.
- During the first 3 months of treatment, see your doctor so he or she can adjust your medication, if necessary.

Find more information about any of these health topics at www.mycarefirst.com

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**Depression**

Life can bring many challenges – job loss, chronic illness, loss of loved ones – and dealing with them is not easy. Physical activity as well as fruits, nuts, vegetables, cereals and fish have been shown to help keep you in a better mood, says the National Institutes of Health.

If you have been feeling down, and the feelings won’t go away, you could be suffering from depression. You can get help by talking to your doctor.
Health Resources

Alzheimer’s Association .................. www.alz.org .................. 800-272-3900
American Association .......................... www.aadenet.org .... 800-338-3633
of Diabetes Educators
American Cancer Society .................. www.cancer.org .................. 800-227-2345
American Council on Exercise .................. www.acefitness.org .... 888-825-3636
American Diabetes Association .................. www.diabetes.org .... 800-342-2383
American Dietetic Association .................. www.eatright.org .... 800-877-0877
American Heart Association .................. www.americanheart.org ... 800-242-8721
American Liver Foundation .................. www.liverfoundation.org .... 800-465-4837
American Lung Association .................. www.lungusa.org .................. 800-586-4872
American Medical Association .................. www.ama-assn.org ... 800-621-8335
Arthritis Foundation .................. www.arthritis.org .................. 800-283-7800
CDC National STD Hotline .................. www.cdc.gov/std/ .... 800-232-4636
Spanish ........................................ 800-232-4636
TTY ........................................ 888-232-6348

Eldercare Locator .................. www.aao.dhhs.gov .................. 800-677-1116
National Cancer Institute .................. www.cancer.gov .................. 800-422-6237
Untitled .................................... 800-458-5231
National AIDS Hotline .................. www.cdcnpin.org .................. 800-422-4453
National Council on Alcoholism .................. www.ncaadd.org .... 800-622-2255
National Headache Foundation .................. www.headaches.org .... 888-643-5552
National Health Information Center .................. www.health.gov/nhic .... 800-336-4797
National Institutes of Health .................. www.nih.gov ................. 301-496-4000
National Mental Health Association .................. www.nmha.org .... 800-969-6642
National Osteoporosis Foundation .................. www.nof.org .... 800-231-4222
National Stroke Association .................. www.stroke.org .................. 800-787-6537

Resources

For more information, visit our Web site at
www.mycarefirst.com

Every effort has been made to ensure that the dates of all
events in this calendar are correct. However, we will not be
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