

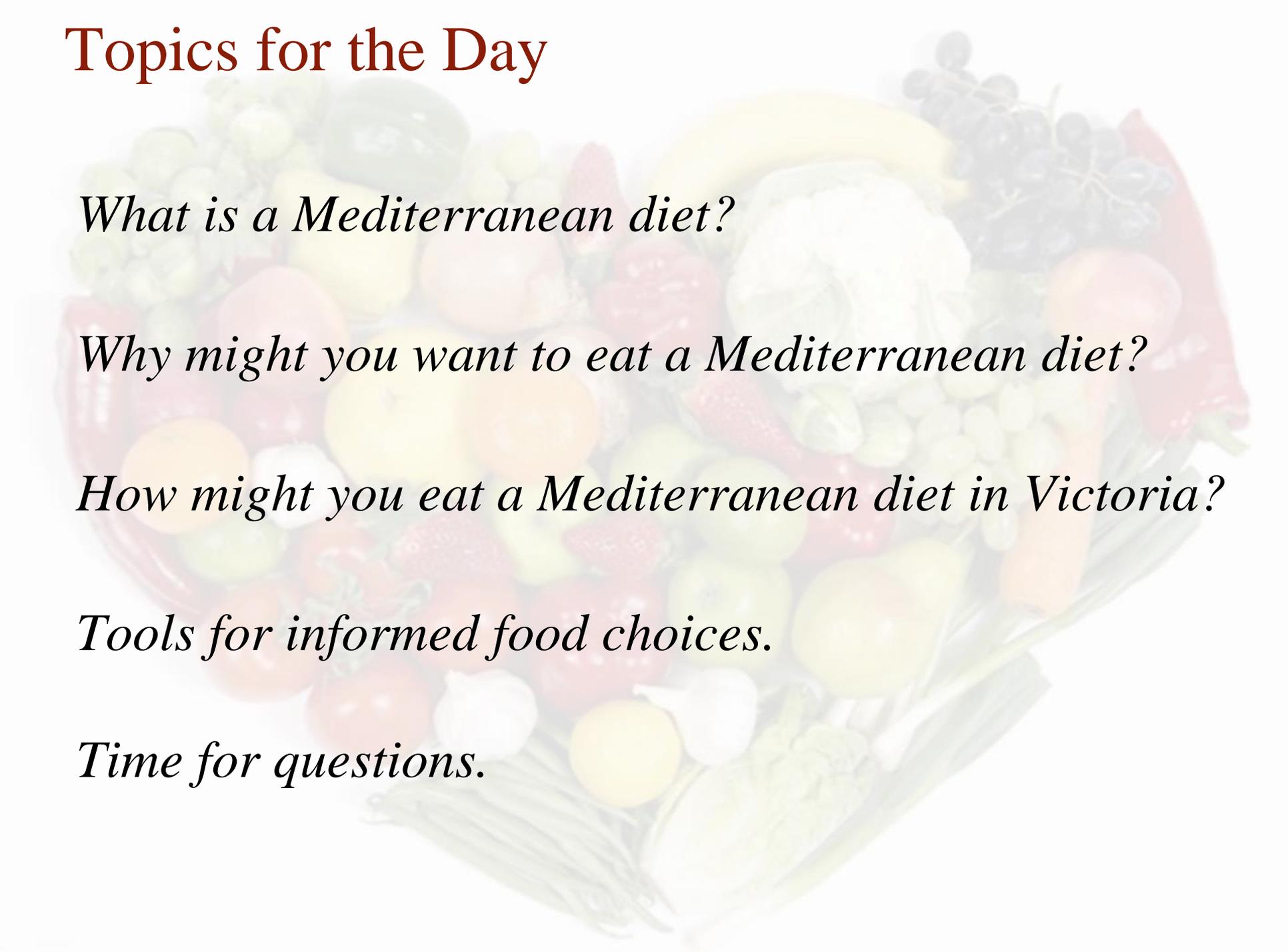


**Why you might want to eat a  
Mediterranean diet & how to do  
it in Victoria or anywhere**

**February 7<sup>th</sup> 2020  
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**Images & Resources  
available at:  
eatwhereyoulive.org**

# Topics for the Day



*What is a Mediterranean diet?*

*Why might you want to eat a Mediterranean diet?*

*How might you eat a Mediterranean diet in Victoria?*

*Tools for informed food choices.*

*Time for questions.*

# What is a diet?

In nutrition, a *diet*, is simply  
“*the foods you eat*”



# Why the Name 'Mediterranean Diet'

Inspired by research into the eating habits of Greece, Southern Italy, and Spain in the 1940s and 1950s



# The Mediterranean Diet



UNESCO *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* of Italy, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Greece, Cyprus, and Croatia.

*"The Mediterranean diet involves a set of skills, knowledge, rituals, symbols and traditions concerning crops, harvesting, fishing, animal husbandry, conservation, processing, cooking, and particularly the sharing and consumption of food."*

# Any diet is only as good as its context

All diets, including a Mediterranean diet are only effective in the context of a *healthful lifestyle* ...

... in order to be healthful, your lifestyle must be:

1. *Physically active: walking ~150 minutes per week.*
2. *Restful: subjectively you must 'get enough rest'.*
3. *Inclusive: sharing meals with family and friends.*



# The Mediterranean Diet



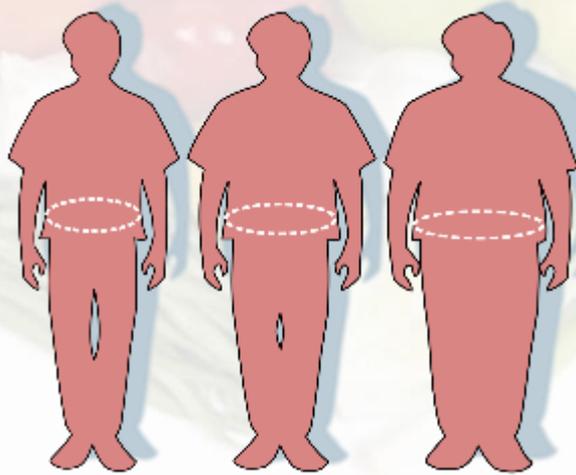
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# Eat Where You Live

Between the ages of 20 yr and 40 yr the average Canadian gains about 22 lbs ... and it's not muscle!

*Eating at home or meals prepared at home is one of the biggest behavioural factors preventing weight-gain for adults and teaches your family and friends positive health behaviours.*



# Why might you choose a Mediterranean diet?

One diet is never exactly right for everyone, but food habits have been studied for disease risk ...

*and*

*Looking back at the lives of large groups of older adults*

Med Diet, in retrospective cohort studies shows:

- Reduced all-cause mortality risk by 8%
- Reduced cardiovascular disease risk by 10%
  - 48% reduced risk in young men with diet high in *brassicas*
- Decreased risk of death from cancer by 6%
- Reduced risk of depression by 32%
- Decreased risk of type 2 diabetes
- Better cognitive performance/slower cognitive decline
- Reduced risk of Alzheimer's disease

# The Mediterranean Diet

Definition in nutrition research is:



*At least two* of the following;

1. *High* monounsaturated/saturated fat ratio
2. *High* consumption of vegetables & fruits
3. *High* consumption of legumes
4. *High* consumption of grains and cereals
5. *Moderate* consumption of milk and dairy products
6. *Low to moderate* red wine consumption
7. *Low* consumption of meat and meat products and increased consumption of fish.

*Must be in the context of a healthful lifestyle.*

# The Mediterranean Diet

What does it look/taste like?

*High* intake (daily) of:

- Olive oil – principle source of fat
  - Animal fats (saturated) only ~ ¼ of fat calories
- Vegetables – green leafy and brassicas
- Fresh fruits – consumed as desserts and snacks
- Nuts & seeds – e.g. 10-12 almonds, 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds
- Legumes – e.g. chick peas, lentils, beans, tofu
- Whole grains – e.g. brown rice, oats, barley, quinoa



# The Mediterranean Diet

What does it look/taste like?

*Moderate* intake (1-4 per week) of:

- Fish & seafood
- Poultry
- Dairy products – mostly cheese & yogurt
- Red wine with meals
  - ~1 glass for women, ~2 for men on some but not all days
  - [BC low-risk drinking guidelines](#)



# The Mediterranean Diet

What does it look/taste like?

*Low* intake (0-3 per week) of:

- Eggs
- Red meat
- Processed meat
- Sweets – pastries, candy, cookies, etc.



# Brassicas or Cruciferous Vegetables

Cruciferous vegetables such as:

- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Cabbage
- Brussel sprouts
- Arugula
- Bok choy
- Radishes
- Kale



Contain the bioactive phytochemical family *glucosinolates* (Webb, 2018)

The [2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) recommend that adults consume 1.5-2.5 cups of dark green vegetables a week.

# The Mediterranean Diet

## Olive Oil (especially EVOO)

- Regular consumption may:
  - Lower risk of all-cause mortality
  - Lower risk of cardiovascular disease
  - Lower risk of cancer
  - Lower risk of neurodegenerative disorders
  - Lower risk of several/most chronic diseases
- The only monounsaturated fat to show this effect
  - Why aren't avocados a substitute?
  - Olives contain:
    1. Oleic acid – a specific type of monounsaturated fat
    2. Polyphenols – a family of *phytochemicals*



# How does the Med Diet compare to the revised Canada's Food Guide?

Canada's food guide

## Eat well. Live well.

Eat a variety of healthy foods each day



Have plenty of vegetables and fruits

Eat protein foods

Make water your drink of choice

Choose whole grain foods

Healthy eating is more than the foods you eat



Be mindful of your eating habits

Cook more often

Enjoy your food

Eat meals with others

Use food labels

Limit foods high in sodium, sugars or saturated fat

Be aware of food marketing

Discover your food guide at [Canada.ca/FoodGuide](https://Canada.ca/FoodGuide)

Canada

*The plate is mostly plants.  
Half vegetables & fruits.  
Limited meat & fish.  
Large variety of foods.*

*Be mindful of eating habits.  
Cook more often.  
Enjoy your food.  
Eat meals with others.*

# A Take Home Message, Not Take Out Food



## 1. Eat where you live

- *Eat at home or food prepared at home*

## 2. Cultivate a healthful lifestyle

- *Go for a walk*
- *Find 'enough' rest*
- *Eat meals with friends or family*

## 3. Eat more plants

- *Choose fruits & nuts/seeds for snacks*
- *Eat vegetables with each meal*
- *Choose plant based protein more often*

# Tools for Informed Food Choices



Tools from Dietitians of Canada:

1. [\*Find a Dietician\*](#)
2. [\*Example one-week meal plan\*](#)
3. [\*Meal planning resources\*](#)
4. [\*Online tool “My Menu Planner”\*](#)
5. [\*Food Portions Toolkit\*](#)

Canada’s Food Guide: [\*food-guide.canada.ca\*](http://food-guide.canada.ca)

Main academic sources: [\*Schwingshackl et al. 2019\*](#)  
[\*Rees et al. 2013\*](#)

Slides from today available at [\*eatwherewelive.org\*](http://eatwherewelive.org)