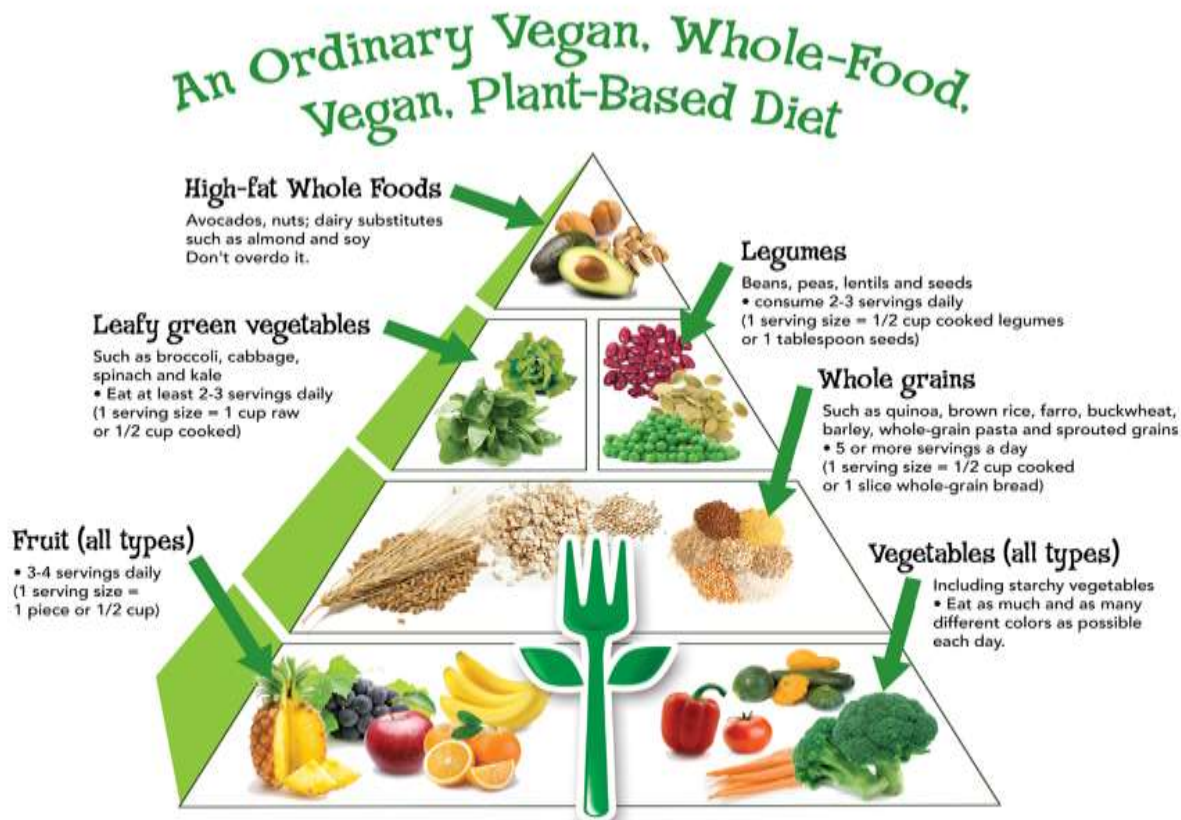




Diet During Menopause

There are many different diets out there that tout relief with menopausal weight gain and insomnia and hot flashes. Two that have been scientifically studied are a Vegetarian and Mediterranean diet. Both of these diets focus on increasing fiber in the diet as well as lean proteins in a Mediterranean diet and plant based proteins in a Vegetarian diet. For a breakdown of these two diets please see below.



Always remember to balance the food you eat with physical activity!

* Be sure to include a good source of vitamin B12, such as fortified cereals or vitamin supplements

You should eat:

- Vegetables. Examples of vegetables include kale, spinach, Swiss chard, collard greens, sweet potatoes, asparagus, bell peppers, and broccoli.
- Fruits. Examples of fruits include avocado, strawberries, blueberries, watermelon, apples, grapes, bananas, grapefruit, and oranges.
- Whole grains. Examples of whole grain include quinoa, farro, brown rice, whole-wheat bread, and whole-wheat pasta.
- Nuts. Examples of nuts include walnuts, almonds, macadamia nuts, and cashew nuts.
- Seeds such as flaxseed, chia seeds, and hemp seeds are included in this food plan.
- Beans and lentils
- Healthy fats and oils such as olive and avocado
- Coffee
- Tea, including green, lavender, chamomile, or ginger.

You should avoid the following foods:

- Dairy products unless you decide to allow them. This includes foods like milk and cheese
- Meat and poultry. This includes foods like chicken, beef, and pork.
- Processed animal meats, such as sausages and hot dogs.
- All animal products. This includes eggs, dairy, and meat if you're following a vegan diet.
- Refined grains such as "white" foods, like white pasta, rice, and bread.
- Sweets like cookies, brownies, and cake.
- Sweetened beverages, such as soda, and fruit juice.
- Fried foods like French fries.
- Honey if you are a vegan.

It is important to remember that this is a generalized list. You can consume things that are not in the list of foods to eat if your variation of the vegetarian diet allows. You should not eat foods that you are allergic to even if they are included in the list of foods to eat. It is always advisable to consult an expert like a dietician when you want to join a new diet. They are the best people to advise you on whether the meal plan you want to follow is suitable for you and the healthiest way to follow it.

Mediterranean Diet Pyramid

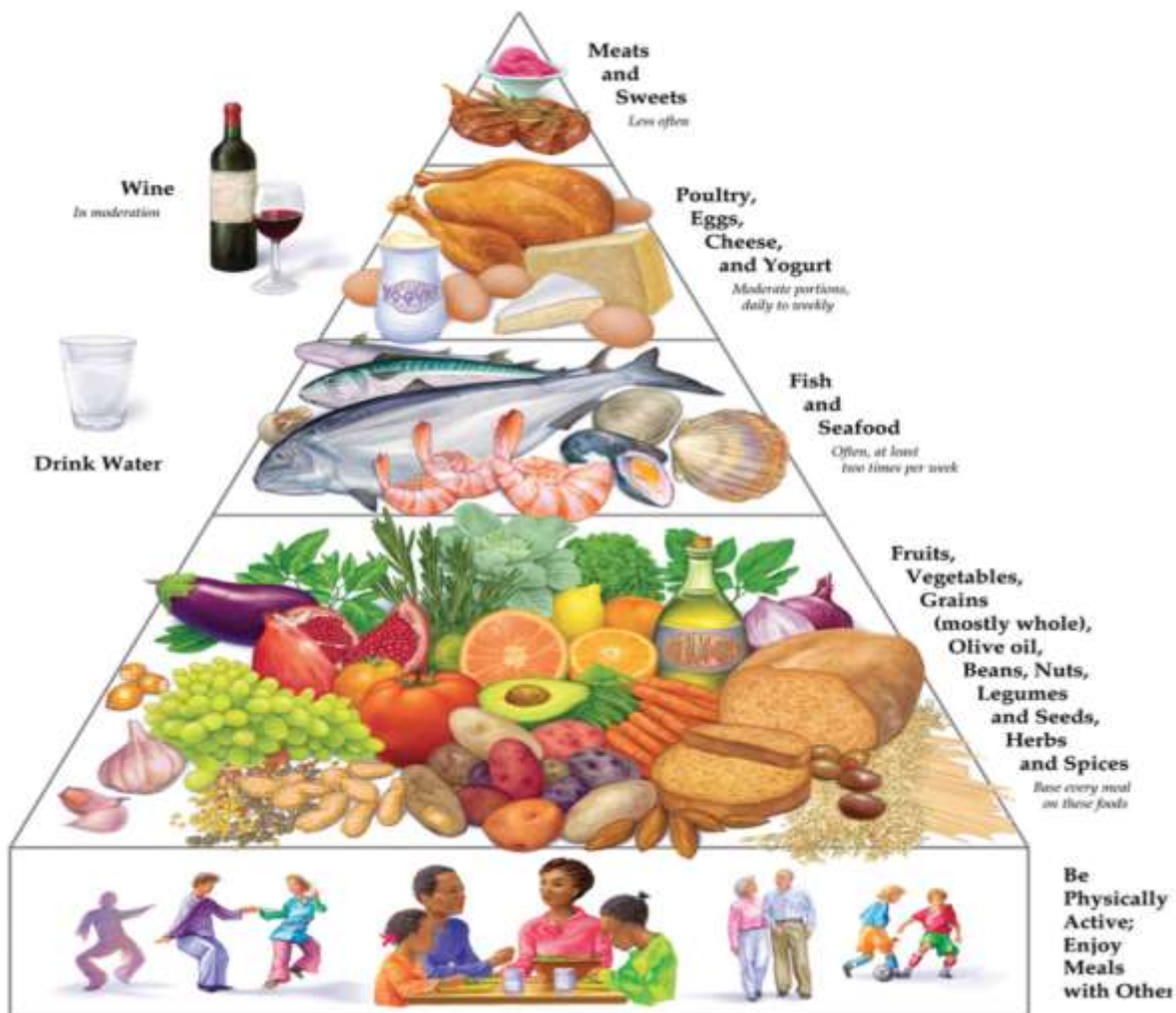


Illustration by George Middleton

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Foods to Eat

Exactly which foods belong to the Mediterranean diet is controversial, partly because there is such variation between different countries.

The diet examined by most studies is high in healthy plant foods and relatively low in animal foods. However, eating fish and seafood is recommended at least twice a week.

The Mediterranean lifestyle also involves regular physical activity, sharing meals with other people and enjoying life.

You should base your diet on these healthy, unprocessed Mediterranean foods:

- Vegetables: Tomatoes, broccoli, kale, spinach, onions, cauliflower, carrots, Brussels sprouts, cucumbers, etc.
 - Fruits: Apples, bananas, oranges, pears, strawberries, grapes, dates, figs, melons, peaches, etc.
 - Nuts and seeds: Almonds, walnuts, macadamia nuts, hazelnuts, cashews, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, etc.
 - Legumes: Beans, peas, lentils, pulses, peanuts, chickpeas, etc.
 - Tubers: Potatoes, sweet potatoes, turnips, yams, etc.
 - Whole grains: Whole oats, brown rice, rye, barley, corn, buckwheat, whole wheat, whole-grain bread and pasta.
 - Fish and seafood: Salmon, sardines, trout, tuna, mackerel, shrimp, oysters, clams, crab, mussels, etc.
 - Poultry: Chicken, duck, turkey, etc.
 - Eggs: Chicken, quail and duck eggs.
 - Dairy: Cheese, yogurt, Greek yogurt, etc.
 - Herbs and spices: Garlic, basil, mint, rosemary, sage, nutmeg, cinnamon, pepper, etc.
- Healthy Fats: Extra virgin olive oil, olives, avocados and avocado oil.

Whole, single-ingredient foods are the key to good health.

What to Drink

Water should be your go-to beverage on a Mediterranean diet.

This diet also includes moderate amounts of red wine — around 1 glass per day.

However, this is completely optional, and wine should be avoided by anyone with alcoholism or problems controlling their consumption.

Coffee and tea are also completely acceptable, but you should avoid sugar-sweetened beverages and fruit juices, which are very high in sugar.

You should avoid the following foods:

- Added sugar: Soda, candies, ice cream, table sugar and many others.
- Refined grains: White bread, pasta made with refined wheat, etc.
- Trans fats: Found in margarine and various processed foods.
- Refined oils: Soybean oil, canola oil, cottonseed oil and others.
- Processed meat: Processed sausages, hot dogs, etc.
- Highly processed foods: Anything labeled “low-fat” or “diet” or which looks like it was made in a factory.

You must read food labels carefully if you want to avoid these unhealthy ingredients.