

## **Mediterranean Diet**

The Alliance promotes healthy eating as a foundational cornerstone of being well and supporting health for the short as well as long-term. “What is a healthy diet?” you might ask. We think a Mediterranean-style diet has the best to offer.

The diet of the Mediterranean region caught the attention of researchers in the 1940s when people of that region had low susceptibility to chronic disease and death even during the rations of World War II compared to the United States.

Research reveals the Mediterranean diet provides a significant, powerful contribution in regards to reducing the risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, dementia and many other chronic diseases as well as improving weight loss/maintenance efforts beyond the low-fat, calorie-controlled approach. If there was a pill that could do that, everyone would be taking it. Fortunately, these benefits do not require a prescription; instead incorporating healthy eating habits mimicking a Mediterranean-style diet can yield these desirable results.

A Mediterranean diet is not necessarily a specific intake of fat, carbohydrates and proteins but quite simply, food intake high in plant-based foods with a minimal to moderate intake of animal-based foods. Additional basic components of a Mediterranean diet include:

- Eating generous amounts of vegetables and fruits
- Consuming healthy unsaturated fats - monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, from sources such as olive oil and fish
- Regular consumption of beans/legumes, whole grains, and small portions of nuts and seeds
- Dairy, poultry and eggs are consumed in low to moderate amounts thru the week
- Eating fish a few times a week while limiting red meat intake
- Moderate red wine consumption (5 ounces for women and 10 ounces for men) daily

It is never too late to reap the positive health benefits from eating a Mediterranean-style diet. The health-promoting rewards can be gained even though started later in life and also even if a health problem has been diagnosed or occurred, like diabetes or a heart attack.