



# MASSAD OLINDE

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## DASH and the Mediterranean Diet



**March is Nutrition Month**, the perfect time to get acquainted with 2 eating plans that are good for your blood pressure and your overall health. They are the Mediterranean Diet and Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension. These aren't short-term, fad diets. They are eating plans for life.

## Eating the Mediterranean Way



Off the shores of the Mediterranean, dinner tables are brimming with fresh fish, vegetables, wholesome beans and olive oil. These are some of the staples of the Mediterranean Diet, which research shows can help prevent heart disease, cancer, dementia and diabetes, and can help reduce blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

**It's easy to fix a Mediterranean plate.** Try these for great flavor and nutrition:

- 1 **Fruits and vegetables:** Fill half of your plate with them. Add berries, leafy greens and orange vegetables such as carrots.
- 2 **Olive oil:** This heart-healthy oil is a Mediterranean diet staple and is perfect to drizzle on salads and veggies. And yes, you can cook and bake with it.
- 3 **Nuts and seeds:** Try a variety including almonds, walnuts, flaxseeds and pumpkin seeds. Snack on them to replace less healthy treats such as chips or pastries.
- 4 **Beans:** Enjoy them dry, canned or frozen in your meals. Try edamame (green soybeans), chickpeas, lentils and kidney beans.
- 5 **Whole grains:** Ditch the white flour in favor of quinoa, oats, brown rice and products made from whole-grain wheat.
- 6 **Herbs and spices:** Cut back on salt by seasoning food with basil, cumin, thyme, cinnamon or your other favorites.
- 7 **Fish, seafood, dairy foods, eggs and chicken:** These protein-rich foods are also on the Mediterranean menu.

**What's missing?** Foods high in salt, sugar and heart-unfriendly fats.

### Grilled Salmon and Quinoa Salad

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|--|--|
| 1 cup quinoa, rinsed                                       | 1. Add quinoa and 2 cups water to a saucepan set over medium heat. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer until water is absorbed, about 15 minutes. |
| 4 salmon fillets (2.5 oz. each)                            | 2. Fluff and transfer to large serving bowl; set aside.  |
| 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, <i>divided</i>              | 3. Meanwhile, brush salmon fillets with 1 tbsp olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.   |
| ½ tsp salt   | 4. Grill on medium for 10 minutes for each inch of thickness.  |
| Pinch pepper   | 5. Set aside and break into bite-sized pieces.   |
| 2 medium carrots, shredded                                 | 6. Add carrots, herbs, lemon and remaining 2 tbsp olive oil to the quinoa.   |
| ¾ cup mixed chopped herbs, such as basil, parsley and dill | 7. Add salt and pepper to taste, and stir to combine.  |
| 1 lemon, juice and zest                                    | 8. Top with grilled salmon pieces and serve.   |

**Makes 4 servings. Per serving:**

406 calories | 21g protein | 21g total fat | 14g saturated fat | 10g mono fat  
7g poly fat | 33g carbohydrate | 2g sugar | 4g fiber | 359mg sodium

## Mediterranean Vegetable Wraps With Tahini-Lemon Dip Salad

- 4 sheets rice paper (for wraps)    1. Soak rice paper so it's pliable, per package directions. Let excess water drip off.
- ½ cup hummus    2. Place rice paper on plate. Spread 1 tbsp of hummus in center of rice paper. Top hummus with kale, carrots, cucumber, mint, cumin and sesame seeds.
- ½ cup kale, shredded
- ½ cup carrots, shredded
- ½ cup cucumber, cut into matchsticks
- 3 tbsp fresh mint
- Pinch ground cumin
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds
3. To wrap, lift 1 side of rice paper and pull it over fillings. Fold the 2 sides over fillings. Continue rolling to seal seam. Repeat with remaining rice paper and fillings.
4. Prepare dip by stirring together tahini, lemon juice, Greek yogurt and salt. Serve wraps with dip.

### Dip

- 1 tbsp tahini (sesame seed paste)
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tsp Greek yogurt
- Pinch salt



### Makes 4 rolls. Per serving (2 rolls):

227 calories | 8g protein | 10g total fat | 2g saturated fat | 4g mono fat  
4g poly fat | 53g carbohydrate | 1g sugar | 5g fiber | 406mg sodium

## Go Nuts Nuts are part of DASH and the Mediterranean

Diet. Yes, they are high in fat, but it's the cardio-protective kind — monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. But while they're good for you, that fat comes with a high-calorie count, so portion size matters. Enjoy a 1- to 1.5-ounce serving (2 to 3 tablespoons), and avoid candied, chocolate-coated, honey-roasted or heavily salted varieties.



## DASH to Better Health

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

**DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension** (high blood pressure). If you have high blood pressure, this plan can help you lower it and protect your heart.

**DASH isn't just for blood pressure.** It also makes sense for anyone who wants to eat for good health, to maintain a healthy weight and for added energy. The DASH diet can also help lower cholesterol and, with weight loss and exercise, can reduce insulin resistance (when the body produces insulin but doesn't use it effectively) and reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

### The DASH diet includes:

- 4 to 5 daily servings each of fruits and vegetables.
- 2 to 3 daily servings of fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.
- 2, 3-ounce daily servings of meat, poultry or fish.
- 6 to 8 daily servings of whole grains.
- 2,300 mg (1 tsp salt) maximum of sodium per day.
- Limited fats, sweets and added sugars.

This plan limits sodium and is rich in potassium, magnesium and calcium. These minerals are essential to healthy blood pressure; you'll benefit more by consuming them in food than in supplements.

Take a closer look at DASH at [nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/dash/](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/dash/).

To get started, decide on 1 easy, short-term goal — such as eating more vegetables each day. As soon as this goal becomes a habit, add another.

