

Stick to a Mediterranean diet for good health

Enjoy vegetables, olive oil and a glass of wine if you want to live a long and healthy life.

This is the message from a study published online in *The British Medical Journal* recently. Scientists have for a long time, known that the normal diet of populations bordering the Mediterranean appear to be particularly healthy, something that is ascribed to their diet. Since the first data from the seven countries study, several studies in different populations have established a beneficial role for the main components of the Mediterranean diet on the occurrence of cardiovascular diseases and chronic degenerative diseases.

The authors of this study looked at information from 12 different studies, which included nearly 1.5 million people, followed over periods from three to 18 years, to tease out an association between sticking to a Mediterranean diet, mortality and the incidence of chronic diseases.

What they found was that sticking to a Mediterranean diet is associated with a significant improvement in health status, as seen by a significant reduction in overall mortality (9%), mortality from cardiovascular diseases (9%), incidence of or mortality from cancer (6%), and incidence of Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease (13%). These results seem to be clinically relevant for public health, in particular for encouraging a Mediterranean-like dietary pattern for primary prevention of major chronic diseases.

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