

# *Mediterranean Diet Pyramid*

## Diet Characteristics

- An abundance of food from plant sources, including fruits and vegetables, potatoes, breads and grains, beans, nuts, and seeds.
- Emphasis on a variety of minimally processed and, wherever possible, seasonally fresh and locally grown foods (which often maximizes the health-promoting micronutrient and antioxidant content of these foods).
- Olive oil as the principal fat, replacing other fats and oils (including butter and margarine).
- Total fat ranging from less than 25 percent to over 35 percent of energy, with saturated fat no more than 7 to 8 percent of energy (calories).
- Daily consumption of low to moderate amounts of cheese and yogurt (low-fat and non-fat versions may be preferable).
- Weekly consumption of low to moderate amounts of fish and poultry (recent research suggests that fish be somewhat favored over poultry); from zero to four eggs per week (including those used in cooking and baking).
- Fresh fruit as the typical daily dessert; sweets with a significant amount of sugar (often as honey) and saturated fat consumed not more than a few times per week.
- Red meat a few times per month (recent research suggests that if red meat is eaten, its consumption should be limited to a maximum of 12 to 16 ounces (340 to 450 grams) per month; where the flavor is acceptable, lean versions may be preferable).
- Regular physical activity at a level which promotes a healthy weight, fitness and well-being.
- Moderate consumption of wine, normally with meals; about one to two glasses per day for men and one glass per day for women (from a contemporary public health perspective, wine should be considered optional and avoided when consumption would put the individual or others at risk.)