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Nutrition Assessment

Part 1

Mediterranean diet. I have chosen this diet because of its flexibility and wide range of components or substitutes. Most of its ingredients are readily available and culturally accepted. Preparing a Mediterranean diet is simple, which makes it a good option for long-term meal planning.

Article Summary

The purpose of the study was to assess the effects of Mediterranean food (nuts and olive oil) in suppressing cardiovascular prevalence within the elderly population. 7,447 Patients over 55 years with high cardiovascular risk, but not sick, were enrolled in the program and subjected to one of the 3 experimental supplements: the mixed nuts together with the extra-virgin olive oil, and the others were advised to lower fat consumption and served as a control subject. A randomized placement method was used and observations were made for the next 4.8 years. Out of the 288 finalists, those under extra-virgin oil supplement had a 3.8% adherence score, 3.4 % for mixed nuts, and 4.4% for the control group (Estruch et al., 2018). The percentage is relevant to cardiovascular risk. Therefore, those under nuts and extra-virgin oil had reduced prevalence against cardiovascular diseases.

Mayo Clinic (Website) Summary

The basics of a Mediterranean diet dictated that one needs to take vegetables, variety of fruits, additionally one should too not forget to include; whole grains, olive oils as well as nuts (Mayo Clinic, n.d.). A weekly diet of beans, fish, and other animal proteins is recommended but in small amounts. Red meat and dairy products are not recommended for daily consumption. Red wine is

recommended while alcohol-based substitutes are not. Various benefits of this diet include enhanced immunity, heart protection, and life longevity. The website does not highlight any cons to the Mediterranean diet. However, the diet fails to integrate adequate calcium, iron, and other mineral nutrients which may lead to bone issues.

Health benefits:

- Boosts memory. Mediterranean diet engages more fish and plant oils which have omega 3 and 6 essential in brain development. Regular consumption of omega 3 fatty acid foods in a Mediterranean diet, boosts cognitive skills, eye function,s, and memory.
- Boost immunity and prevents inflammation. Vegetables and nuts contain a wide range of chemical antioxidants and detoxifying agents that prevent organ inflammation.

Specific Guidelines

When preparing a Mediterranean diet, one must use healthy fats or oils to cook e.g. virgin olive oil. Secondly, spices are also recommended to enhance flavor and palatability. Finally, it is important to consume vegetables and fruits as salads or cooking them lightly to prevent nutrient loss.

References

Estruch, R., Ros, E., Salas-Salvadó, J., Covas, M. I., Corella, D., Arós, F., ... & Lamuela-Raventos, R. M. (2018). *Primary prevention of cardiovascular disease with a Mediterranean diet supplemented with extra-virgin olive oil or nuts*. New England journal of medicine, 378(25), e34.

Mayo Clinic (n.d.). *Mediterranean diet: A heart-healthy eating plan*. Accessed from:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in->

[depth/mediterranean-diet/art-](#)

[20047801#:~:text=The%20foundation%20of%20the%20Mediterranean,meat%20is%20eaten%2](#)

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Part 2

Name of the health plan: Mediterranean lifestyle diet.

Day 1:

Breakfast: 2 slices of whole-meal bread, avocado slices, tea

Snack: A cup of strawberries

Lunch: Mixed fruit salad, olive oil dressing

Snack: Banana, mixed nuts

Dinner: Chickpea stew, steamed spinach, cheese dressing

Snack: Apple slices + mixed olives

Day 2

Breakfast: 1 scrambled egg, sliced tomato

Snack: Greek yogurt

Lunch: Fried fish, kale soup

Snack: peanuts

Dinner: Bean stew, whole-meal toast

Snack: Orange juice, chopped carrots

Day 3

Breakfast: Apple smoothie, toast, peanut butter

Snack: Almonds

Lunch: Fish and kale stew

Snack: Regular yogurt, banana

Dinner: Whole-meal toast, avocado slices, wine

Snack: Cheese, olives

2) Challenges in creating the menu:

- Some ingredients were expensive e.g. extra-virgin olive oil, pure almonds, and mixed nuts (cashew, peanuts, macadamia). Every cooking utilizes olive oil, hence its consumption was high. Some ingredients also required proper label scrutiny to know whether they concur with my health plan.
- Time-consuming. To shop and prepare meals for the first time was tedious and mentally challenging. I had to review my shopping list and recipe book regularly in both exercises respectively.

3) Easiest steps.

- Making the snacks was very easy. Slicing apples, mixing fruits, and adding olive dressing was not challenging.
- Recipe review. All the steps and recipes are readily available on the internet. Healthline and Mayo Clinic briefly describes everything I needed to make a decision.

Part 3

I choose to discuss the first day of the meal plan.

- 1) The challenge was new recipes and ingredients. Measurement and application became a more complicated task. I was not used to measuring olive oil amounts for dressing which made me over-apply. The salad became soggy, which I had to decant the excess amount of oil.
- 2) The easiest part was meal preparation. The Mediterranean lifestyle diet plan on day 1 involved a brief cooking of food to prevent nutrient loss. The use of spices in a stew made food more palatable and enjoyable.

Part 4

- 1) I would share the below with the friend:
 - A fad diet eliminates most nutritional components of vegetables, whole-meal, and dairy products unlike in health plans where everything is guided by body need (RDA). Most minerals are eliminated from fad diets.
 - A fad is aimed at short-term results while healthy eating is for long-term effects. Quick dietary modifications such as fad, brings fast results which may contain severe risks. On the other hand, healthy planning brings consistent results over a long period and has no risks involved.
- 2) I will use research and meal planning knowledge to enhance my diet choices in the future by concentrating on the following:
 - Food variety
 - Diet quality and quantity (food portions)
 - Recommended dietary allowances (RDA)
 - Resources available (time, money, ingredients).

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