

The Modified Mediterranean Diet

Dietary Guidelines



A Resource for Dietary Change

by Sharon Erdrich

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The Modified Mediterranean Diet for Men: Dietary Guidelines (1st Ed)

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Introduction

This resource booklet was put together in 2013, specifically for the men participating in my Masters' research into the Mediterranean Diet in men with prostate cancer. My gratitude is again expressed for those who volunteered to participate in our pilot study, aiming to reduce inflammation through diet.

During this study men were asked to change their dietary habits for a minimum of six months. They were asked to include foods that have been found to have an anti-inflammatory affect and avoid foods that have shown to be detrimental in this regard. This guidebook was designed to support this change and to enhance understanding of the general principles of the diet. In addition, the separate *Recipe Collection* has a number of recipes that meet the criteria for this diet, as well as some "treats" for special occasions. At the end of this booklet is a sample menu planner to help you get started.

We offer help in terms of support, education, recipes and some food samples.

The Study Diet

Men were asked:

- To change dietary habits for six months to include anti-inflammatory foods and cut out processed, refined, high sugar and high fat foods
- To complete a seven-day food diary at the beginning, middle and end of the study
- To complete two questionnaires about diet and lifestyle
- To fill in an evaluation on this study and offer feedback on what did and did not work

As of 2013, the University of Auckland had been running a prostate cancer study for the previous five years, looking at which foods New Zealand prostate cancer sufferers consume. From the information collected, we were able to group foods that show the most obvious signs of either being beneficial for, or detrimental to, a participant's health. We also read through academic literature to find foods that may have a positive effect with respect to reducing the risk of developing prostate cancer, slowing its rate of progression, or reducing inflammation. Using this data we have modified a typical Mediterranean-style diet in the belief that it may reduce inflammation and other markers associated with prostate cancer.

The general guideline is as follows:

- Salmon or any other cold water fish such as mackerel, cod, snapper, trevally, sardines or terakihi - at least twice a week. Ideally one serve per week would be salmon
- At least four portions of fresh vegetables a day. Pumpkin, broccoli, tomatoes, kumara and fresh green vegetables are a major focus here
- No more than two portions of fresh fruit a day with the inclusion of pomegranates - we would like you to consume fresh pomegranates, or pomegranate juice, daily. Other preferred fruits are dark cherries and berries

- Healthy fats in the form of **extra virgin** olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds
- Whole grains and legumes (e.g. beans, peas, lentils and soy). Grains would include whole grain breakfast cereals and wholemeal bread and pasta
- We would like you to consume at least one portion of legumes each day; a greater quantity would be preferable
- Lean red meats, maximum twice a week
- Turmeric – add this to any suitable recipe
- Green tea daily
- Water

In outlining which foods to eat, we took inspiration from the Mediterranean diet as well as data from existing literature and our own studies. This diet focuses on foods that are rich in healthy fats, include a lot of fish and sea food, and an abundance of fresh vegetables, legumes, beans, nuts and whole grains. The Mediterranean diet involves using very little processed food; you are encouraged to use fresh food whenever possible.

The Mediterranean Diet

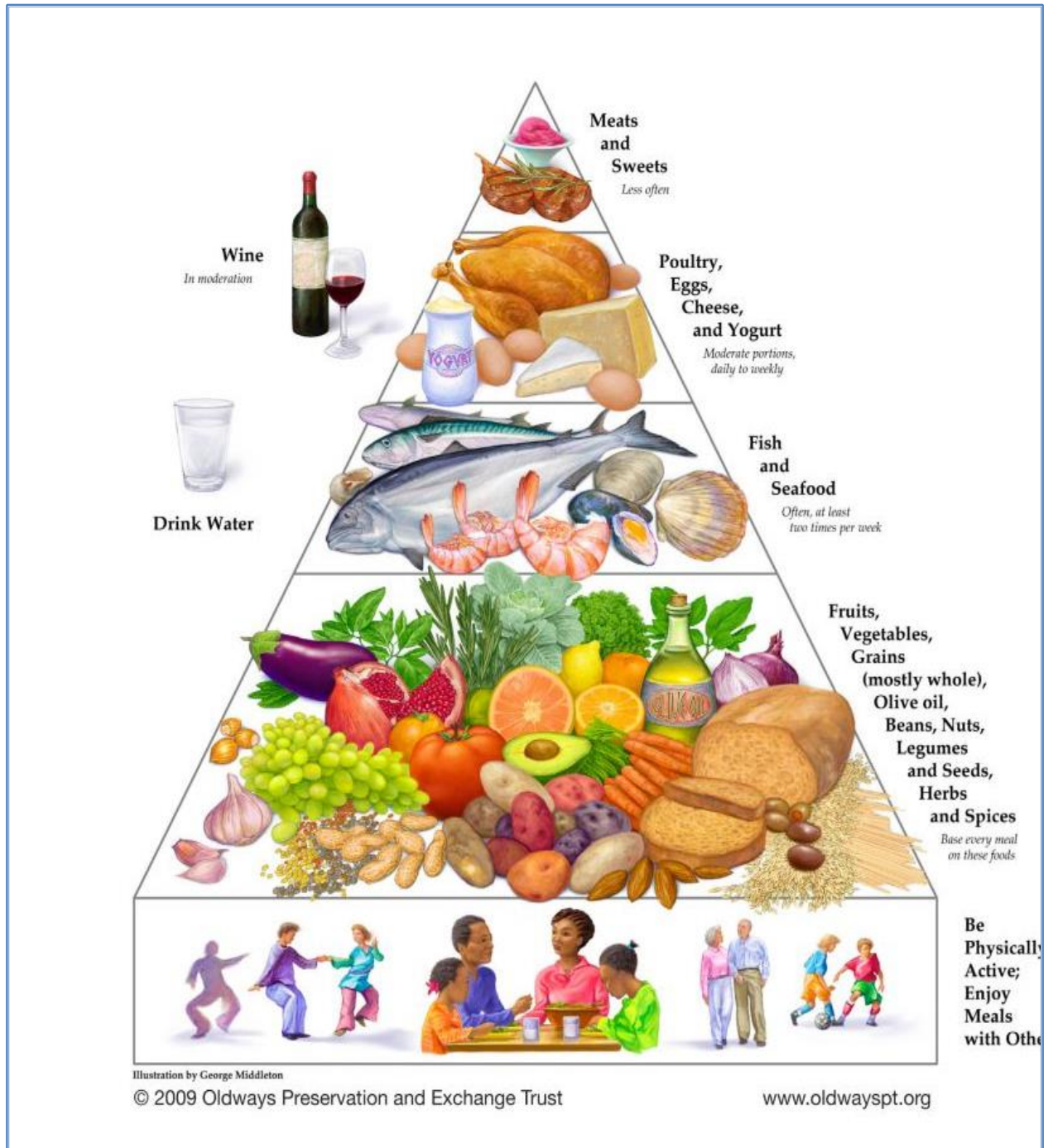
'The Mediterranean Diet'¹ describes the health benefits of a Mediterranean style diet:

- Lowers bad cholesterol
- Lowers high blood pressure
- Improves heart and artery health
- Improves health and mental function
- Aids in weight loss
- Improves the health of your skin

While we are not following a Mediterranean diet completely, there are a number of similarities, in particular the inclusion of whole grains, olive oil, plentiful vegetables and the preference for fish.

¹ The Mediterranean Diet: Unlocking the Secrets to Health and Weight Loss the Mediterranean Way, by Chatham, J., Williams, L., and Williams, P. (2011) Rockridge University Press, CA.

The Mediterranean Diet Pyramid



General Dietary Guidelines

When deciding which foods to eat please use the following guidelines. However, if there are particular foods we have recommended that you do not like, do not feel obliged to eat them. Ask us about suitable substitutes.

Grains

Wholegrain foods are the best choice of grain-based products, as these contain the most beneficial properties for your health. This applies not only to bread but also when you are choosing cereals, pasta and rice. If you like to have rice for example, you should choose brown or basmati rice, or other alternatives like quinoa².



Gluten-Free Options

If you are already following a gluten-free diet then please continue to do so. While gluten (one of the proteins in wheat and other grains) can cause inflammation in some people we recognise that changing to a gluten-free diet can be extremely challenging and we are not asking you to remove gluten from your diet. Many of the recipes that follow are gluten-free or can be easily adapted for a gluten-free diet.

Fruits and Vegetables

Vegetables have always been considered invaluable to one's diet. A wide range of vegetables offer great health benefits. Include a variety of vegetables with dark rich colours. Try to increase your intake of vegetables to six or more servings a day.

Please make every effort to use fresh vegetables – avoid using vegetables that have been in the refrigerator for over a week. Aim to purchase fresh vegetables 2 – 3 times a week and use within the next 3 - 4 days. Alternatively, you could blanch (by immersing in boiling water for 2 - 4 minutes) and then freeze your fresh produce.



Broccoli

Data from various prostate cancer studies, as well as studies on other forms of cancer, suggest that broccoli may be of particular benefit. Please aim to consume 400 g of broccoli per week. We also ask you to consume a wide range of other vegetables including pumpkin, butternut, carrots, spinach, silverbeet, kale, beetroot, cauliflower, cabbage/Chinese cabbage/bok choy, green beans, lettuce and tomato, amongst others.

² Quinoa is a grain-like seed from South America. It is very high nutritious and tasty. It is cooked in the same way as rice. For cooking tips see page 57.

Tomatoes

Tomatoes are a traditional ingredient in Mediterranean-style cooking. Several studies have shown that tomatoes, particularly cooked tomatoes, have a beneficial effect in regards to prostate cancer. A substance called *lycopene* is believed to be the active substance in tomatoes, which is enhanced by cooking. We recommend the inclusion of 2 – 4 serves per week of cooked or canned tomatoes, tomato paste, puree or tomato-based pasta sauces.

Fruit

The consumption of large quantities of fruit and fruit juice is not encouraged due to the high sugar content of many fruits and the harmful effects that sugar may have on numerous aspects of health. On the other hand the consumption of pomegranates (see below) may be beneficial and hence the consumption of this fruit is encouraged – daily if possible. If you do want to consume fruit or something sweet then berries, cherries and red grapes are the preferred choices.

You do not have to limit yourself to just the fruits and vegetables mentioned above, as variety is also important!

Pomegranates

Pomegranates originated in Iran and are now widely cultivated. They have always been highly prized for their flavour, but with recent emergence as a highly nutritious super-food, packed with antioxidants, they have become very popular.

Research on the beneficial effect of pomegranate consumption on many health conditions, including cancer and prostate cancer in particular, supports the incorporation of this “food of the gods” in liberal amounts in this diet.



Pomegranate is an acquired taste – the juice is slightly tart or astringent – to get used to it you might like to add a small amount of a non-sugar sweetener or a small amount of (unsweetened) grape juice to it – over time reduce the grape juice until you are having pure pomegranate juice. Be sure to choose 100% pure pomegranate juice, without added sugar.

The fruits are round with a hard, shiny red skin. Inside the fruit, bedded into a soft but bitter, yellow pith, are numerous small edible white seeds, held in ruby-coloured sacs filled with sweet, juicy flesh.

Neither the skin nor the pith should be eaten.

To prepare: Cut the fruit open across its middle. Pick out the seeds with a toothpick and enjoy.

To get all the seeds and juice, hold a cut half upside down over a bowl and, bash the skin with a rolling pin. The seeds should pop out.

Another method that you may find useful is to cut the fruit into wedges. Place the wedges in a large bowl of water and break the wedges apart to remove the seeds. The seeds will sink to the bottom and the bitter pith and skin will float to the top making it easy to remove.

To extract the juice: Put the seeds in a sieve and press out the juice with the back of a spoon. Avoid crushing the sac membranes as this can cause bitterness.

Be careful when preparing pomegranates, as the juice stains.

Pomegranate Molasses

This is a concentrate of pomegranates, sometimes called “Pomegranate Syrup”, and is available ready-made from shops selling Eastern and Indian foods. Look for one without added sugar. It is sweetly tart and is a good accompaniment to poultry; simply brush over the meat prior to cooking – the outside will be crispy and have a tasty tangy flavour. Add it to your vinaigrette salad dressing along with generous amounts of chopped parsley and mint. Use it to help tenderise meats by adding to marinades. Pomegranate molasses can also be diluted with water to make cordials and sorbets – add a little non-sugar sweetener to taste.



Pomegranate Molasses
(Image from www.simplyrecipes.com)

The separate recipe collection includes dips, sauces and salads using pomegranates or pomegranate molasses – we strongly encourage you to incorporate these into your diet.

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Where to Buy Pomegranate Juice

Below is a list of retailers in Auckland and Hamilton. Many Middle-Eastern grocery stores also stock good (sugar-free) pomegranate juice and molasses.

Albany	Albany New World: 219 Don McKinnon Drive
Avondale	Quandahari Bazaar: 1 St Jude St
Birkenhead	Birkenhead New World: 180 Mokoia Road,
Botany	Botany New World: 588 Chapel Road
Browns Bay	Browns Bay New World: 8 Bute Road
Dannemora	Fruit World: Unit 4, 345 Chapel Road
Glen Innes	Fruit World: 185 Apirana Ave
Glenfield	Pak n Save Wairau: 30 Wairau Rd
Glenfield	North Shore Meat Centre: 171 Archers Road
Glenfield	Barakah Fresh Food: 171-173 Archers Road
Green Bay	Green Bay New World: 64 Godley Rd
Grey Lynn	Fruit World: 280 Richmond Rd, Grey Lynn
Hamilton	Hillcrest New World: 280 Cambridge Rd
Hamilton	Rototuna New World: 44 Horsham Downs Rd
Hamilton	Kiwi Fresh: 15 Bader St, Meriville

Hamilton	Fruit World: 4 Enderley Ave, Enderley
Hamilton	Garden Fresh Fruit and Vege: 680 Grey St, Claudelands
Hamilton	Magic Fresh Dinsdale: 22 Tuhikaramea Rd, Dinsdale
Hamilton	Fruit and Vege Market: 254 Kahikatea Drive
Hamilton	Vetro Mediterranean Foods: 538 Anglesea St
Henderson	Pak n Save Lincoln: Lincoln Rd, Lincoln North Shopping Centre
Henderson	Fruit World: 313 Lincoln Road
Hobsonville	Hobsonville Garden & Orchards: 120 Hobsonville Rd
Kohimarama	Kew Gardens Fruit Centre: 43 Melanesia Road
Kumeu	Kumeu Produce Market: Main Highway 16
Manurewa	Manurewa New World: Southmall Great South Road
Milford	Milford New World: 141 Kitchener Road
Mt Albert	Fruit World: 955 New North Rd
Mt Roskill	Fruit World: 30A Frost Road
Mt Roskill	Khyber Foods & Spices: 164 Stoddard Rd
New Lynn	New Lynn New World: 6 Crown Lynn Place
Newmarket	Skazka - European Bakery and Delicatessen: 16 Kingdon Street
Newmarket	Wise Cicada: 23 Crowhurst St
Orewa	Orewa New World: 11 Moana Ave
Otahuhu	Fruit World: 26 Salesyard Road, Otahuhu
Pakuranga	Fruit World: 290 Ti Rakau Drive
Pakuranga	Abella Food: 14B Cortina Place
Pakuranga	Fresh Halal Meat: 114 Reeves Rd
Pakuranga	Fruit City: Pakuranga Plaza
Panmure	Panmure New World: Jellicoe Court
Papakura	Papakura New World: 40-44 East Street
Papatoetoe	Papatoetoe New World: St George Street
Papatoetoe	Sindbad Grocery: 8 Tui Road
Remuera	Remuera New World: Clonbern Road
Sandringham	Spice Supermarket: 537-539 Sandringham Road
St Heliers	St. Heliers Bay Fruit Market, 17 St Heliers Bay Rd
Takanini	Fruit World: 230 Great South Road
Takapuna	Takapuna New World: 371 Lake Rd
Te Rapa	Te Rapa New World: 751 Te Rapa Rd
Te Rapa	Highway Supplies: 1000 Te Rapa Rd
Waiuku	Waiuku New World: 25-49 Bowen St
Waiuku	Waiuku Supervalu, 67-69 Queen St
Warkworth	Warkworth New World- 6 Percy Street
West Harbour	Passion Produce: 92 Hobsonville Rd
West Harbour	Hobsonville Garden & Orchards: 120 Hobsonville Rd

To purchase online, or for retailers in other regions, check online:

<http://www.pomegranatejuice.co.nz>

Healthy Fats and Oils

While many people think they should avoid all fats, it is essential to have good fats in your diet. Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are desirable because they help to lower cholesterol and are good for the heart.

The best sources of these good fats are in oily fish, olive oil, avocados, nuts and seeds. You can include up to ¼ of an avocado a day if you wish. Avocado and macadamia nut oils are also suitable for salads and cooking. You can use olive oil for cooking providing you don't cook at a high heat, and as an ingredient in salad dressings.

We would like you to incorporate at least one tablespoon of **extra virgin** olive oil into your diet each day. The olive oil for this study is grown in New Zealand, kindly donated by Oil Seed Extractions (OSE) Ltd and is guaranteed extra virgin, with high polyphenol content. While refrigeration is not necessary, to protect the beneficial qualities of the oil it should be stored in a dark container, away from sources of heat.



While olive oil is mostly fat, of which about 14% is saturated fat, this seems to be of less significance in terms of ill-effects than saturated fats from animal sources. Hence while some of the recipes may appear to have amounts of saturated fat (above what you might consider desirable), most of this is coming from the olive oil, so is not considered problematic.

We would like you to avoid butter or margarine, but if you do need to use some, then select a product like 'Olivio' that is olive oil based, or make your own pure olive oil spread (see the recipe book) as an alternative to butter. You can use olive oil instead of butter in mashed potatoes or on drizzled on kumara and in most savoury dishes. Try *Dukkah* - a wholesome snack using wholegrain bread dunked in olive oil and a seeds-and-spice mix (see the recipe book, or purchase Dukkah from the deli section of your supermarket).

Nuts and Seeds

Nuts and seeds are a great source of protein and healthy fats and we recommend you include one portion per day (approximately 30 g). They are high in omega 3 and have a low glycaemic index, meaning they will keep you feeling full for longer. However, you need to make the right choices when consuming nuts: almonds, Brazil nuts and walnuts are best. Ideally they should be raw and unsalted. The addition of seeds such as sunflower, pumpkin and sesame



increases the range of nutrients and helps provide variety. Alternate your choices or create your own unsalted nut mixes.

1 portion = 14 shelled walnut halves, 22 shelled almonds, 16 cashews, 8 Brazil nuts or 45 pistachios.

Legumes


Legumes are an excellent source of beneficial dietary fibre. They also provide good taste with very little fat. There are many choices including: red kidney beans, lentils, cannellini beans, butter beans, chickpeas, split peas, soy and many more. Please consume at least one serving of beans per day.

Cooking Times for Legumes

While most of the recipes with legumes specify using canned varieties, preparing them yourself means savings in terms of money, but they do take time.

All the pulses below should be soaked overnight, unless indicated with a *. A pressure cooker is very useful to reduce the cooking time pulses require. As a general guide, 1 cup of dried legumes will yield 2 – 2 ½ cups when cooked.

Bean/Pulse	Approximate Cooking Time	In Pressure Cooker
Adzuki beans	45 minutes	15 minutes
Black beans	60 minutes	20 minutes
Black-eyed beans	50 minutes	15 minutes
Barlotti beans	90 minutes	25 minutes
Broad beans	90 minutes	40 minutes
Cannellini beans	50 minutes	15 minutes
Chickpeas	90 minutes	30 minutes
Haricot beans	50 minutes	20 minutes
Lentils– whole*	45 minutes	15 minutes
Lentils – split*	20 minutes	-
Lima beans	90 minutes	20 minutes
Mung beans	45 minutes	15 minutes
Pinto beans	50 minutes	20 minutes
Red kidney beans	60 minutes	20 minutes
Soy beans	150 minutes	50 minutes



Note: While not necessary for cooking, pre-soaking lentils does help remove some of the sugars which can cause flatulence.

Fish and Seafood

Fish is one of the best sources of dietary omega 3, and is an important component of this diet. We recommend salmon due to its high protein and omega 3 content. Salmon



for this study has been kindly donated by Aoraki Smokehouse Salmon Ltd.

In addition you can choose from other cold water fish such as: cod, mackerel, terakihi, snapper, gurnard, trevally, hoki and sardines (all have high amounts of omega 3).

Fish is best enjoyed poached or baked, or try it Japanese style (Sushimi) when dining out, for example.

Please avoid fried fish unless sautéed gently in a small amount of olive oil.

Poultry and Eggs

Chicken and other poultry can be included once or twice a week. Aim to consume between one and four eggs per week (including those used in cooking) unless this is contraindicated by other health issues, allergies or intolerances.

Red Meat

Red meat is only eaten in small amounts in the Mediterranean diet and can be included a few times per month. Use lean cuts of lamb or veal, or try some of the lower saturated fat options now available, including goat's meat and venison.

Dairy Products



Eat low to moderate amounts of yoghurt and cheese. Use low fat milk and avoid butter. White cheeses are often found in Mediterranean-style diets – these can be made from cow, goat or sheep's milk. Select low fat cheese such as ricotta or cottage cheese, or possibly feta cheese.

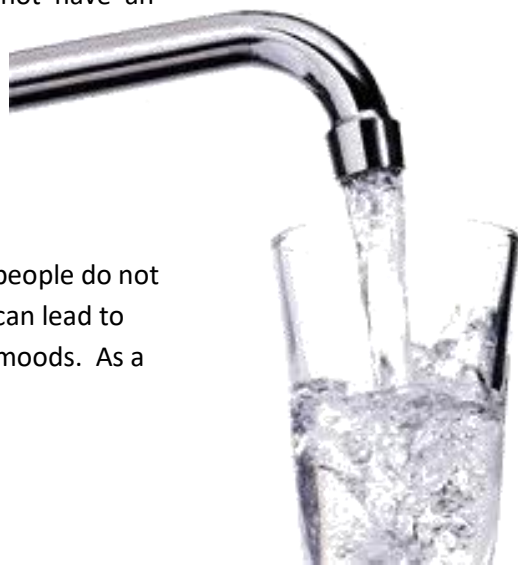
You can serve these cheeses with breakfast, in salads, or as a quick snack on bread or crackers. A small amount of Parmesan or pecorino (goat milk cheese) can be used for flavouring.

Turmeric

Curcumin is a component of the spice turmeric. It has been used for a long time for medicinal benefit, which may include anti-inflammatory properties. It goes well in many curry dishes, soups and stews, and does not have an over-powering spicy taste. There are a number of recipes included in recipe collection that use turmeric, or try adding it to some of your favourite dishes.

Water

Water is essential to a healthy body. Many people do not drink enough water during the day and this can lead to confusion, fatigue, headaches and negative moods. As a



general guide, eight standard glasses of water is often considered desirable.

Green Tea

Many studies have looked at green tea as an anti-inflammatory agent. Its consumption has now become very popular. Whether drinking it for the taste or the health benefits, try adding this to your daily routine instead of coffee. We recommend green leaf tea instead of green tea bags, as this is what the majority of research has been done on. Green tea can be an acquired taste, and some people may prefer to mix it with one of the commercial fruity flavour teas or to add herbs such as mint, lemon balm or a squeeze of lemon juice.



Alcohol

A moderate consumption (up to two glasses a day – this is non-accumulative!) of red wine may be beneficial for those who consume alcohol. This is not for everyone.

Purple grape juice may contain antioxidants similar to those in red wine without the concerns of alcohol.



We encourage study participants to consume pomegranate juice in preference to other juices or alcoholic drinks.

Lifestyle Guidelines

Weight Management

A healthy weight is important for your overall wellbeing. If you aim to lose weight, please discuss this with one of the study team.

Exercise

A moderate level of exercise is beneficial for your body in general, your immune system, energy levels, mental health and overall wellbeing. NZ Ministry of Health guidelines for physical activity state that moderate physical activity improves outcomes for men with prostate cancer.

We encourage you to do **at least** 30 minutes of moderately intensive physical activity per day. This can be any activity in which you can still hold a conversation – such as brisk walking. If you have been inactive for some time, we recommend you check with your doctor before commencing an exercise regime.

When building up your exercise tolerance, start slowly: commence with shorter periods, such as 5 or 10 minutes, gradually building up to 30 minutes of moderate activity - initially walking, then increasing the intensity to brisk walking, then light jogging, cycling or swimming. In general, find ways to get extra movement into your day, such as taking the stairs instead of the lift.



Brisk walking is beneficial for your overall health.

Image from <http://www.nhs.uk>

FOOD TABLES

Using the data collected from University of Auckland prostate cancer research and other relevant scientific articles we have been able to draw up a guideline of specific foods to focus on. They are outlined in the table below.

Foods to Emphasize <i>These foods may reduce inflammation or have other properties that may benefit those with prostate cancer or which are neutral in this respect</i>	Foods to Avoid <i>These foods may be associated with the risk or progression of prostate cancer</i>
<p>VEGETABLES Broccoli Dark green leafy vegetables Tomatoes (particularly cooked tomatoes) A variety of vegetables (fresh or frozen) Kumara</p> <p>GRAINS Brown or basmati rice Whole grains (whole wheat, oats etc.) Quinoa</p> <p>PROTEIN Fish - mainly oily fish (e.g. salmon) Soft fresh cheeses (e.g. ricotta and feta cheese)</p> <p>FRUITS Pomegranates/pomegranate juice Berries (e.g. blueberries, raspberries, strawberries) Red grapes</p> <p>LEGUMES Beans, peas, lentils, chickpeas Hummus</p> <p>FATS & OILS Nuts / Seeds Avocados Olives Olive oil, extra virgin (avoid over-heating) Avocado and macadamia nut oils</p> <p>OTHER Turmeric Water Green Tea</p>	<p>Vegetables canned or processed with sugar</p> <p>Refined foods e.g. white bread, crisps and pies</p> <p>Processed meats e.g. bacon and salami</p> <p>Avoid fruit intake or fruit juices above two portions per day</p> <p>Foods high in animal fats, including dairy (milk, cream, butter) Fried foods e.g. French fries, battered fish, deep fried food Chicken skin, fatty cuts of meat, visible meat fat Highly refined oils</p> <p>High sugar foods (cakes, biscuits, muffins, doughnuts, sweets, ice-cream, desserts high in sugar or fats, chocolate, soft drinks, and fruit juices)</p> <p>Foods cooked at high temperatures (e.g. BBQ)</p>

Sample Week Menu Planner

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
BREAKFAST	Porridge made with milk ³ + a small serving of nuts and seeds ⁴ Pomegranate – whole fruit or juice	Wholegrain toast with poached eggs and sautéed mushrooms	Cereal with milk or yoghurt and blueberries. Pomegranate – whole fruit or juice	Porridge made with milk + a small serving of nuts and seeds	Bircher muesli* with milk or yoghurt and blueberries or pawpaw	Breakfast frittata* or spinach and mushroom omelette Pomegranate juice	Toasted bagel with 10 g cream cheese, ¼ avocado and smoked salmon
SNACK (if needed)	Hummus* with crackers	Pomegranate fruit or juice	Baba Ghanoush dip* with pita bread	Bean dip* with raw capsicum and celery	Pomegranate fruit or juice	Plain yoghurt with nuts and seeds	Handful of red grapes
LUNCH	Avocado bean salad*	Salmon, lentil & pomegranate salad* plus broccoli with lemon and almond butter*	Tuna patties* with pomegranate, orange and baby spinach salad*, OR canned sardines on wholegrain toast with sliced tomato	Mixed bean salad with sun-dried tomatoes* Pomegranate fruit or juice	Simple bean soup*(with a bread roll if desired) or Baked Beans (sugar-free) with wholegrain toast	Roasted aubergine and capsicum with anchovies on whole grain bread, OR baked beans on wholegrain toast	Tortilla with lettuce, rocket, cucumber, grated carrot, feta cheese and olives
SNACK (if needed)	Mixed olives, feta cheese and cucumber	Plain yoghurt with nuts and seeds or celery sticks with 10 g of almond butter	Hummus* with crackers and olives	Low fat yoghurt with berries	Dukkah*, wholemeal bread & olive oil, +/- sliced tomato and mixed olives	Carrot sticks with white bean dip*	30 g mixed nuts and seeds
DINNER	Grilled salmon*, boiled kumara, steamed broccoli salad* and a mixed garden salad	*Grilled Indian chicken with sautéed cauliflower*, green beans and brown rice	Pumpkin, chickpea & cauliflower curry* served with brown or basmati rice	Venison stir fry* served with brown rice	Roast chicken with roasted pumpkin, zucchinis, tomatoes, kumara and peas or broccoli	NZ seafood stew* with a steamed broccoli salad* and wholegrain bread roll	Spinach, red lentil and bean curry* served with brown rice + yoghurt and a cucumber salad.

Options when out and about:

Sushi with any of the following: tuna/salmon/avocado/vegetables (please avoid deep fried sushi).

Chicken or falafel kebab – choose hummus, garlic yoghurt and sweet chilli dressings.

Caesar salad or a “wrap” make good choices.

* The recipes for these dishes can be found in the “Modified Mediterranean Diet for Men: Recipe Collection”

³ Milk should be (in order of preference) soy milk, almond milk, low fat cow’s milk.

⁴ If preferred, nuts and seeds can be ground and either mixed in after cooking, or sprinkled on top before serving.

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