

IEHA Program Lesson Submission

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Topic Title:	Healthy and Delicious Mediterranean Cooking
Topic Description: <small>(Information should be researched, educational, approved for use (if you are not the author, seek approval from materials author), and presented in a format that would allow an individual to read, study, and teach to other peers. All copyright issues should be resolved before submission.)</small>	<p>Learn which countries use delicious Mediterranean eating patterns and why they are healthy. Learn about the variety of colorful foods included and how to cut costs with Mediterranean cooking. Participants will get a small map of Mediterranean countries, a tip sheet for eating in the Mediterranean style, and two easy recipes to try at home.</p> <p>Lesson information and materials are provided through a professional membership in Food and Health Communications which includes a license to copy and distribute materials from their website.</p>
Short Goal/Objective Statement for Lesson:	Participants will learn the health benefits of Mediterranean cooking and receive two recipes for Mediterranean dishes.

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IEHA Leader Lesson

Healthy and Delicious Mediterranean Cooking

This lesson includes:

- A map showing Mediterranean countries
- A handout sheet *“Eating Mediterranean Fun and Tasty”*
- A handout sheet *“Which Herbs with Which Foods?”*
- Fast Facts about the Mediterranean Eating Pattern (below)
- Two easy plant-based Mediterranean recipes (Greek Pasta Salad, Parsley Hummus)
- Lesson Activity Suggestion

Fast Facts:

Where did the Mediterranean Diet Start?

The Mediterranean diet is enjoyed by countries that are near the Mediterranean Sea. Those countries include:

- Italy
- France
- Spain
- Greece
- Morocco and others

The warmer temperatures in Mediterranean countries lead to a more active lifestyle with plenty of daily exercise.

Mediterranean recipes call for tasty plant-based foods:

- Fruits (lemons, oranges, grapes, apricots, and dried fruits)
- Vegetables (garlic, eggplant, tomatoes, peppers, greens, fennel, and sweet peppers, herbs and spices are often used)
- Whole-grains (couscous, rice, pasta, breads with whole grains)
- Nuts and seeds (quinoa, walnuts, almonds, cashews)
- Occasional small servings of fish and poultry (only 12 to 16 ounces of red meat per month)
- Cheese and yogurt (used in small amounts)

Most foods are enjoyed in their natural states without added sugars, salt, or chemicals. Fresh herbs and spices are often used to add delicious flavors to Mediterranean dishes.

What are the health benefits of Mediterranean eating patterns?

- Plant-based food, whole-grains, and nuts are high in fiber and help with improving digestion, regularity, balancing blood sugars, and feeling satisfied after meals.
- Healthy monounsaturated fats in nuts, olive oil, and fish, help keep down inflammation in the body and protect against heart disease and type 2 diabetes.
- In one study, people who followed the Mediterranean diet had a 50%-70% lower risk of recurrent heart disease than those who did not.
- Studies of people over 60 showed the Mediterranean Diet may lead to improved health and protect against dementia as we age.
- The Mediterranean eating pattern is one that can be adjusted to your preferences and the whole family can enjoy it together. It also makes an easy way to create a delicious and colorful meal for guests.

There are many health benefits to the Mediterranean Diet. In addition, recipes are easy to prepare and less expensive than meat-based recipes. Fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables of all colors and textures fit into the Mediterranean eating pattern.

Lesson Activity Suggestion:

Use the easy recipe for *Parsley Hummus* to demonstrate a Mediterranean recipe to IEHA members. Offer the recipe to members in individual servings with whole-grain crackers or chips. Try sprinkling colorful chopped vegetables on top to add flavor and interest.

Janet Steffens, Area 2 Health Educator, prepared this lesson.

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Mediterranean Countries

- Italy
- France
- Spain
- Greece
- Morocco
- and More!

These countries make up a region of lands surrounding the Mediterranean Sea and spanning across 3 continents- Europe, Africa, and Asia. Countries in the Mediterranean region experience mild to cool, rainy winters and warm to hot, dry summers. Each country has its own version of the Mediterranean diet depending on local foods.

Eating Mediterranean

Fun & Tasty

Ways to make the most of a Mediterranean eating pattern

Reduce Cost

1 Buy seasonal fruits & veggies -- they're less expensive and more nutritious

2 Canned beans, canned tuna, and lentils are cheap protein sources

3 Choose stores that offer low prices without compromising food quality

Prioritize Nutrients

4 Choose whole grains instead of refined grains for a nutrient and fiber boost

5 Limit your purchases of foods with empty calories

6 Stock up on frozen spinach, broccoli, and peppers for extra vitamin C

Boost Flavor

7 Flavor your food with dried and fresh herbs like basil, oregano, and thyme

8 Add depth and spice to your meal with garlic

Parsley Hummus

 foodandhealth.com/recipe_print.php

Serves: 8 | Serving Size: 1/4 cup

Total Time: 5 min | Prep: 5 min | Cook: 0 min

Ingredients:

1 15-ounce can garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained

1/4 cup water

1 tablespoon olive oil

2 tablespoons lemon juice

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 cup chopped parsley

Directions:

In a food processor or blender, combine all ingredients, except parsley, and blend until smooth.

Pulse or stir in the parsley.

Serve as a spread or dip for bread, crackers, or fresh vegetables.

Serves 8. Each 1/4 cup serving: 64 calories, 3g fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 71mg sodium, 8g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 0g sugars, 3g protein.© Food and Health Communications

Greek Pasta Salad

 foodandhealth.com/recipe_print.php

Serves: 6 | *Serving Size:* 2 cups

Total Time: 10 min | *Prep:* 10 min | *Cook:* 0 min

Ingredients:

3 cups dried spiral pasta
1 cup diced cucumber
1 cup diced ripe tomato
1/4 cup chopped red onion
1 cup garbanzo beans
3 tablespoons diced black olives
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon olive oil
1 teaspoon chopped mint leaves
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar

Directions:

Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain in colander and rinse with cold water. Allow to stand until ready to use.

Toss the rest of the ingredients together in a large salad or mixing bowl. Add the pasta.

Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready to serve.

Serves 6. Each 2 cups serving: 153 calories, 3g fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 146mg sodium, 29g carbohydrate, 6g fiber, 2g sugars, 5g protein.

Allergens: Wheat

* Reported allergens are based on listed ingredients in the recipe. If you are purchasing commercially packaged products such as pie crusts, cereal, or pasta, you need to read the label for additional allergen information.

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