Increased Vegetable Consumption, Affordability, and Cultural Traditions: More Positive Public Health Benefits for Pasta

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The affordability of Pasta

Economics…

Socioeconomic variations in women's diets: what is the role of perceptions of the local food environment?

V Inglis, K Ball, D Crawford

Results: Once perceived environmental variables were considered, the associations between SEP and diet were weak and non-significant, suggesting that socioeconomic differences in diet were almost wholly explained by perceptions of food availability, accessibility and affordability.

A program made by the Portuguese Association of Nutritionists, aiming to tackle the economic crisis by suggesting nutrient-rich and affordable meals.

Seven recipes, each of them focused in one nutrient, costing 1€ per person;
One was a pasta meal.

Three additional suggestions for the reuse of leftovers;
Two were pasta meals.

Pasta, vegetable consumption and health.

Dietary patterns among older Europeans: the EPIC-Elderly study

Christina Bamia[1], Philippos Orfanos[1], Pietro Ferrari[2], Kim Overvad[3], Heidi H. Hundborg[4], Anne Tjønneland[5], Anja Olsen[5], Emmanuelle Kesse[6], Marie-Christine Boutron-Ruault[7], Françoise Clavel-Chapelon[6], Gabriele Nagel[8], Paolo Boffetta[2,8], Heiner Boeing[9], Kurt Hoffmann[9], Dimitrios Trichopoulos[1,10], Nikos Baibas[1], Theodora Psaltopoulou[1], Teresa Norat[2], Nadia Slimani[2], Domenico Palli[11], Vittorio Krogh[12], Salvatore Panico[13], Rosario Tumino[14], Carlotta Sacerdote[15], H. B. Bueno-de-Mesquita[16], Marga C. Ocké[16], Petra H. Peeters[17], Caroline T. van Rossum[16], José-Ramón Quirós[18], Maria-José Sánchez[19], Carmen Navarro[20], Aurelio Barricarte[21], Miren Dorronsoro[22], Göran Berglund[23], Elisabet Wirfält[23], Göran Hallmans[24], Ingegerd Johansson[24], Sheila Bingham[25], Kay-Tee Khaw[26], Elizabeth A. Spencer[27], Andrew W. Roddam[27], Elio Riboli[2] and Antonia Trichopoulou[1]*

Fruits	Fresh fruits, nuts, seeds, stewed fruit, mixed fruits and olives
Potatoes	Potatoes and potato products, except potato crisps
Legumes	Dried peas, lentils and beans, except soya
Cereals and cereal products	
Pasta, rice and other grain	Pasta, rice, other grain
Bread	Bread, crisp bread, rusks
Other cereals	Flour, flakes, starches, breakfast cereals, salty and aperitif biscuits, dough and pastry (puff, short-crust, pizza)
Cakes	Cakes, pies, pastries puddings (non-milk-based), dry cakes, biscuits
Sugar and confectionery	Sugar, jam, marmalade, honey, chocolate and products, candy bars, confetti/flakes, drops, boiled sweets, chewing gum, nougat, cereal bars, marzipan, syrup, water ice
Added fats	
Vegetable oils	Vegetable oils
Margarine	Margarines, mixed dairy margarines, baking fat
Butter	Butter, herbal butter, butter concentrate
Dairy products	Liquid milk (e.g. cow's, goat's), processed milk (condensed, dried), whey, milk beverages, yoghurt, cheeses, cream desserts, puddings (milk-based), dairy creams, ice cream
Meat and products	Beef, veal, pork, lamb/mutton, horse, goat, poultry, game and offal, processed meat from red meat or poultry (e.g. ham, bacon, sausages, pâtés, etc.)
Eggs	Eggs (e.g. chicken, turkey, duck, goose, quail) and egg products, except if used for bread and bakery products
Fish and shellfish	Fish and fish products, crustaceans and molluscs
Non-alcoholic beverages	Tea (with and without caffeine); iced tea: infusion, powder, instant beverage; coffee (with and without caffeine): infusion, powder, instant beverage. Carbonated/soft/isotonic drinks, diluted syrups. Fruit and/or vegetable juices and nectars, freshly squeezed juices: pure or diluted with water
Alcoholic beverages	Expressed as ethanol
Wine	

Table 3. Principal components and corresponding scoring coefficients for dietary variables in the EPIC-Elderly population (From The EPIC-Elderly study)

Principal components	Positive scoring coefficients	Negative scoring coefficients	Variance explained (%)
Principal component 1 (PC1)			14·6
'Vegetable-based' diet	Vegetable oils (0·46)	Non alcoholic beverages (−0·31)	
	Fruits (0·34)	Potatoes (−0·27)	
	Pasta, rice and other grain (0·34)	Margarine (−0·24)	
	Vegetables (0·33)		
	Legumes (0·25)		
Principal component 2 (PC2)			9·7
'Sweet- and fat-dominated' diet	Other cereals (0·33)	Meat (−0·36)	
	Cakes (0·32)	Bread (−0·28)	
	Condiments & sauces (0·29)	Other alcoholic beverages (−0·26)	
	Margarine (0·28)	Wine (−0·25)	
	Sugar and confectionery (0·22)	Eggs (−0·20)	
	Dairy products (0·20)		
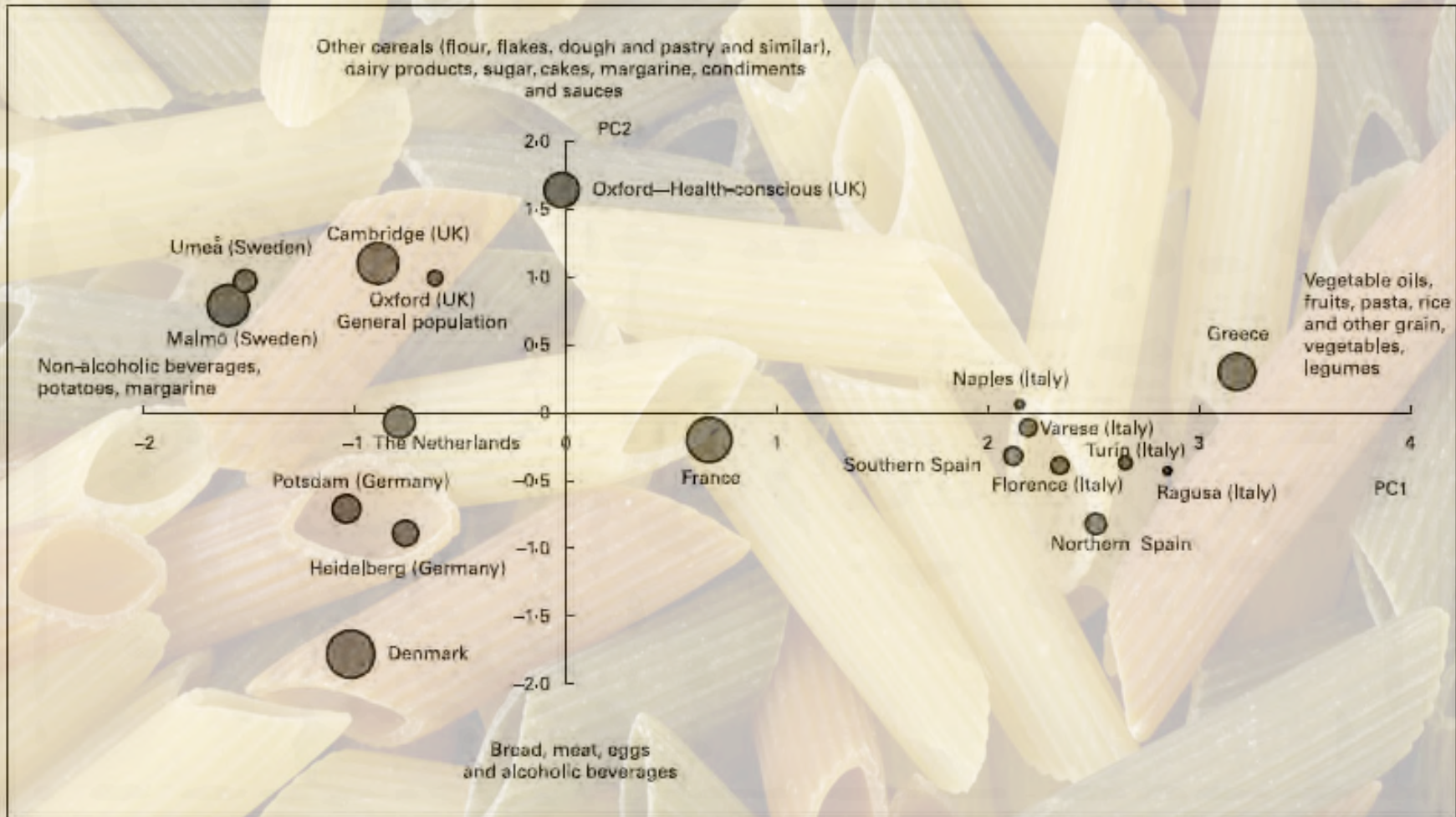
Fig. 1. Mean score of principal component 1 (PC1) and principal component 2 (PC2) by participating centre. (●) denote centre-specific mean scores, the size of the circles being proportional to the size of the respective cohort (From The EPIC-Elderly study).

Association between dietary patterns and plasma biomarkers of obesity and cardiovascular disease risk[1–3]

Teresa T Fung, Eric B Rimm, Donna Spiegelman, Nader Rifai, Geoffrey H Tofler, Walter C Willett, and Frank B Hu

TABLE 3
Age- and energy-adjusted mean biomarker values by quintile of prudent and Western diet scores in 1994[1]

Biomarker	Prudent diet (factor 1)				Western diet (factor 2)			
	Q1: −1.17[2]	Q3: −0.15	Q5: 1.56	P for trend	Q1: −1.16	Q3: −1.14	Q5: 1.49	P for trend
Cholesterol (mmol/L)	6.3 ± 0.1	6.5 ± 0.1	6.4 ± 0.1	0.64	6.1 ± 0.1	6.5 ± 0.1	6.5 ± 0.1	0.12
HDL cholesterol (mmol/L)	1.5 ± 0.1	1.6 ± 0.1	1.6 ± 0.1	0.81	1.5 ± 0.1	1.6 ± 0.1	1.6 ± 0.1	0.74
LDL cholesterol (mmol/L)	3.8 ± 0.1	3.9 ± 0.1	3.9 ± 0.1	0.63	3.7 ± 0.1	4.0 ± 0.1	3.8 ± 0.1	0.29
Total cholesterol:HDL cholesterol	4.3 ± 0.1	4.2 ± 0.1	4.3 ± 0.1	0.63	4.4 ± 0.1	4.3 ± 0.1	4.3 ± 0.1	0.94
Triacylglycerols (mmol/L)[3]	1.7 ± 0.2	1.9 ± 0.2	2.0 ± 0.2	0.56	2.0 ± 0.2	2.3 ± 0.2	1.5 ± 0.2	0.14
Apolipoprotein A-I (g/L)	1.5 ± 0.03	1.5 ± 0.03	1.5 ± 0.03	0.65	1.5 ± 0.03	1.6 ± 0.03	1.6 ± 0.03	0.03
Lipoprotein(a) (μmol/L)	1.0 ± 0.2	1.1 ± 0.1	1.4 ± 0.2	0.31	1.4 ± 0.2	1.0 ± 0.1	1.0 ± 0.2	0.03
Fibrinogen (μmol/L)	5.5 ± 0.01	5.5 ± 0.01	5.4 ± 0.01	0.61	5.4 ± 0.01	5.5 ± 0.01	5.5 ± 0.02	0.06
von Willebrand factor	1.51 ± 0.07	1.48 ± 0.06	1.52 ± 0.07	0.48	1.45 ± 0.07	1.54 ± 0.06	1.54 ± 0.07	0.44
Factor VII antigen	1.01 ± 0.012	0.99 ± 0.011	0.98 ± 0.012	0.20	0.98 ± 0.01	1.02 ± 0.01	0.99 ± 0.01	0.07
tPA antigen (ng/L)	129 ± 5	120 ± 5	110 ± 5	0.13	99 ± 5	120 ± 5	140 ± 5	<0.0001
Insulin (pmol/L)[3]	62.9 ± 7.3	70.7 ± 7.0	90.7 ± 7.9	0.54	82.8 ± 7.7	70.8 ± 7.0	63.5 ± 8.1	0.21
C-peptide (nmol/L)[3]	0.52 ± 0.05	0.65 ± 0.05	0.82 ± 0.06	0.65	0.78 ± 0.05	0.65 ± 0.05	0.54 ± 0.06	0.29
Glycated hemoglobin	0.057 ± 0.001	0.057 ± 0.001	0.058 ± 0.001	0.57	0.057 ± 0.001	0.058 ± 0.001	0.058 ± 0.001	0.76
Leptin (ng/L)	6741 ± 504	6310 ± 482	6431 ± 509	0.75	5277 ± 487	6331 ± 472	8941 ± 525	<0.0001
C-reactive protein (mg/L)	2.4 ± 0.3	1.6 ± 0.3	1.8 ± 0.3	0.17	1.7 ± 0.3	1.9 ± 0.3	2.5 ± 0.3	0.04
Homocysteine (μmol/L)	16.5 ± 0.6	14.7 ± 0.5	14.0 ± 0.6	0.03	13.9 ± 0.6	15.4 ± 0.5	16.8 ± 0.6	0.004
Folate (nmol/L)	18.4 ± 0.8	19.3 ± 0.8	20.3 ± 0.8	0.34	21.4 ± 0.8	18.3 ± 0.7	17.2 ± 0.8	0.007

[1] $\bar{x}$ ± SE. tPA, tissue-type plasminogen activator.
[2] Quintile of diet score (1, 3, or 5) and median score.
[3] Values for those who had fasted <6 h were excluded.

Dietary Patterns in Adolescence Are Related to Adiposity in Young Adulthood in Black and White Females[1,2]

Lorrene D. Ritchie,[3]* Phil Spector,[3] Mary J. Stevens,[4] Marcia M. Schmidt,[5] George B. Schreiber,[6] Ruth H. Striegel-Moore,[7] May-Choo Wang,[3] and Patricia B. Crawford[3]

"Healthy pattern, followed by 12% of white girls and characterized by a high intake of fruits, vegetables, dairy, grains without added fats, mixed dishes and soups, and a low intake of sweetened drinks, other sweets, fried foods, burgers, and pizza, was related to more favorable nutrient intakes and a smaller increase in waist circumference."

Food intake patterns associated with carotid artery atherosclerosis in the Insulin Resistance Atherosclerosis Study

Angela D. Liese[1]*, Michele Nichols[1], Denise Hodo[1], Philip B. Mellen[2], Mandy Schulz[3], David C. Goff Jr[4] and Ralph B. D'Agostino Jr[4]

variables and the RRR method. With increasing quartile of this food pattern, intake of low-fibre bread and cereal, red and processed meat, cottage cheese, tomato foods, regular soft drinks and sweetened beverages increased and intake of wine, rice and pasta, meal replacements and poultry decreased.

THE CAROTID ARTERY
RIGHT SIDE

Damaged Artery

Normal Artery

Intima-media Thickness
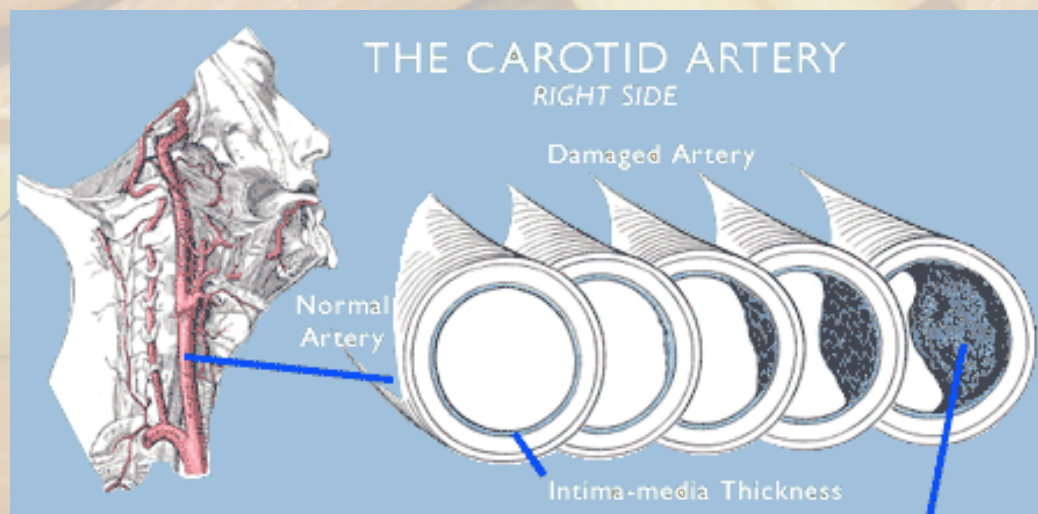
ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Changes in Diet and Lifestyle and Long-Term Weight Gain in Women and Men

Dariush Mozaffarian, M.D., Dr.P.H., Tao Hao, M.P.H., Eric B. Rimm, Sc.D., Walter C. Willett, M.D., Dr.P.H., and Frank B. Hu, M.D., Ph.D.

Figure 1. Relationships between Changes in Food and Beverage Consumption and Weight Changes Every 4 Years, According to Study Cohort.

Study participants included 50,422 women in the Nurses' Health Study (NHS), followed for 20 years (1986 to 2006); 47,898 women in the Nurses' Health Study II (NHS II), followed for 12 years (1991 to 2003); and 22,557 men in the Health Professionals Follow-up Study (HPFS), followed for 20 years (1986 to 2006). Weight changes are reported for each increase in the daily serving of the food or beverage; decreased intake would be associated with the inverse weight changes. There was little evidence of a significant interaction between diet and physical activity (P>0.10 for the interaction in each cohort). All weight changes were adjusted simultaneously for age, baseline body-mass index, sleep duration, and changes in smoking status, physical activity, television watching, alcohol use, and all of the dietary factors shown. The P value is less than 0.001 for all dietary factors with the exception of butter in the NHS II, cheese in the NHS and NHS II, low-fat or skim milk in the NHS and HPFS, diet soda in the NHS, and whole-fat milk in all three cohorts.
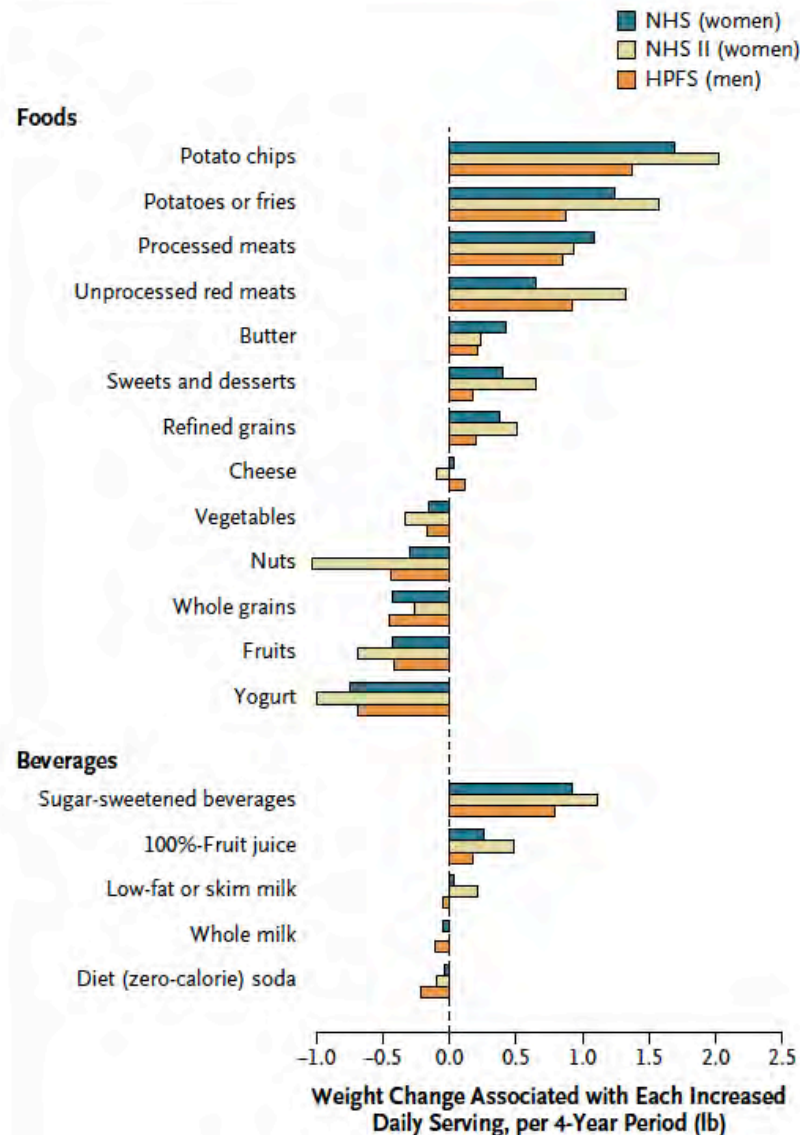
Association between major patterns of dietary intake and weight status in adolescents

Gretchen J. Cutler[1]*, Andrew Flood[2], Peter J. Hannan[2], Joanne L. Slavin[3] and Dianne Neumark-Sztainer[2]

Study results differed by sex, and overall showed little support for the study hypotheses that higher adherence to dietary patterns characterised by vegetables and fruits would be associated with a lower risk of being overweight or obese, and that the opposite would be true for patterns characterised by snack foods and fast food.

Pasta worldwide
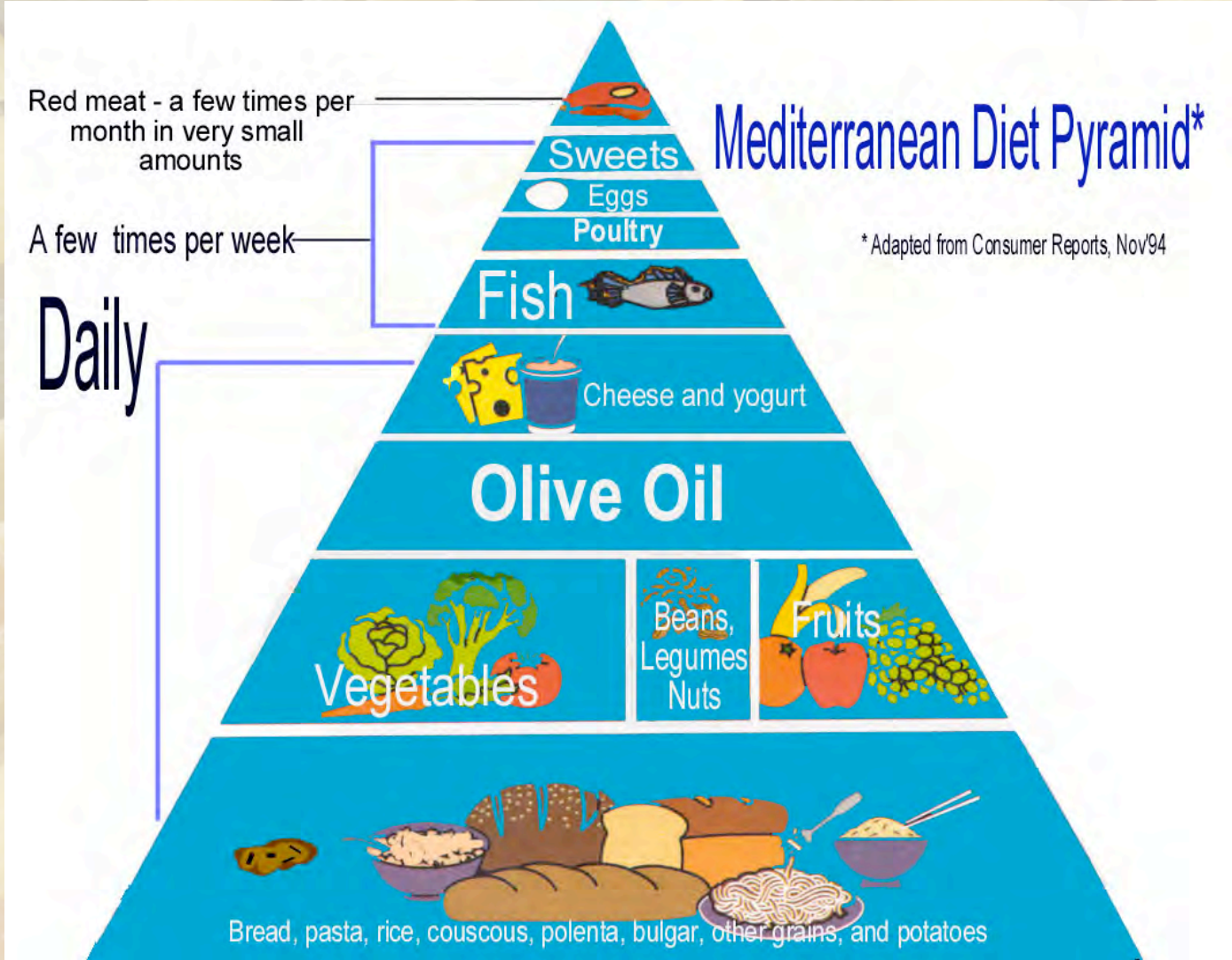
Mediterranean Diet Pyramid*

Red meat - a few times per month in very small amounts

A few times per week

Daily

Sweets

Eggs

Poultry

Fish

Cheese and yogurt

Olive Oil

Vegetables

Beans, Legumes Nuts

Fruits

Bread, pasta, rice, couscous, polenta, bulgar, other grains, and potatoes

* Adapted from Consumer Reports, Nov'94

La Pirámide de La Dieta Latinoamericana

Una Propuesta Contemporánea a una Sana y Tradicional Dieta Latina

Latin American Diet Pyramid

A Contemporary Approach to the Healthy and Traditional Latino Diet

Beba Agua
Drink Water

Carne y Dulces
Con menos frecuencia

Meats and Sweets
Less often

Pollo, Huevos, Quesos, y Yogur
En raciones moderatas, diariamente o semanalmente

Poultry, Eggs, Cheese, and Yogurt
Moderate portions, daily to weekly

Cerveza y Vino
En moderación

Beer and Wine
In moderation

Pescado y Mariscos
Frecuentemente, por lo menos dos veces a la semana

Fish and Seafood
Often, at least two times per week

Frutas, Vegetales, Granos (principalmente enteros), Frijoles, Nueces, Leguminosas, y Semillas, Hierbas, y Especias
Base cada alimentación en estas comidas

Fruits, Vegetables, Grains (mostly whole), Beans, Nuts, Legumes and Seeds, Herbs, and Spices
Base every meal on these foods

Este físicamente Activo; Disfrute su Comida con Otros.

Be Physically Active; Enjoy Meals with Others.

Illustration by George Middleton

1-3
porções

3-5
porções

2-3
porções

1,5-4,5
porções

1-2
porções

3-5
porções

4-11
porções

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PASTA RECIPES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Tips on Cooking Pasta

Pasta tastes its very best when eaten right after it's cooked. The golden rule is to cook pasta "al dente"—neither too raw nor too cooked. To taste pasta at its finest, just follow these simple guidelines and cooking times:

- Pour a generous amount of water (1 liter per 100 grams of pasta) into the pot, and place pot on high heat. Add salt (10 grams per liter of water).
- When the water begins to boil, add the pasta to the pot.
- Let the water return to a boil, stirring the pasta from time to time, cooking it for the "boiling time" displayed on the pasta label.
- Use a colander to drain the pasta, and then put the pasta on individual plates. Add your favorite sauce, mix well and serve hot.

title

ingr

instructions

Makes 2-3 Servings

Argentina

Capellini with Peppers, Tomatoes, and Prosciutto

250 grams capellini
150 grams diced prosciutto
1 red pepper
1 green pepper
1 carrot
30 grams pine nuts
3 peeled and chopped tomatoes
150 grams grated cheese
Pinch of paprika powder
Pepper and salt to taste
2 tablespoons of olive oil

Clean or peel the peppers, tomatoes, and carrot and cut them into small pieces. Heat the butter in the pan over low heat and sauté the pine nuts gently until light brown. Then add the pieces of carrot, peppers and prosciutto, turn heat to medium and simmer until all begins to brown. Add the tomatoes and simmer until tomatoes begin to break down. Season the mix with pepper, salt and paprika powder.

In the meantime, cook the pasta per the package instructions. Toss the pasta and sauce and sprinkle with the grated cheese.

Makes 2-3 Servings

Belgium

Spaghetti with Lemon

400 grams of spaghetti
3 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
1 onion, grated
¼ cup of lemon juice
2 tablespoons of lemon zest
1 pinch of nutmeg and pepper
1 desert spoon of basil
2 tablespoons of cheese type 'minas' (unsalted)

Boil water and cook the pasta until al dente, drain and set aside.

In a saucepan, heat the margarine and add onion, lemon juice and lemon zest, nutmeg and pepper, mix well and pour over spaghetti.

Add the basil, mix well and sprinkle with grated cheese.

Serve immediately.

Makes 4 Servings

Brazil

Whole Wheat Rotini with Tomatoes and Zucchini

375 grams whole wheat rotini
1 garlic clove, chopped
1 onion, chopped
50 milliliters olive oil
12 cherry tomatoes, cut in half
Salt and pepper
Grated Parmesan cheese to taste

Cook rotini according to package instructions.

Meanwhile, sauté onion, garlic, and zucchini in olive oil over medium-low heat until tender. Add tomatoes and parsley or basil and heat through.

Toss cooked rotini with vegetable mixture and serve topped with grated Parmesan cheese.

Makes 4–6 servings

Canada

Spaghetti with Avocado and Nut Sauce

1 large avocado
50 grams nuts, peeled and chopped
1 garlic clove
15 milliliters olive oil
Salt and pepper
200 grams of spaghetti

Peel and spoon out the avocado. Cut the avocado flesh into cubes.

In a blender or food processor, puree the avocado, nuts, olive oil, salt and pepper (to taste) until it forms a smooth creamy mixture.

In the meantime, cook pasta according to directions. Make sure the pasta is cooked al dente.

Once drained, mix pasta with avocado mixture and serve.

Makes 4 servings

Chile

Vegetable Soup with Pasta

190 grams small sized pasta
2 liters of broth (chicken, beef, or vegetable)
2 stalks celery, chopped
2 carrots, chopped
230 grams green peas
1 bunch cilantro, chopped

Heat the broth in a medium pot. Add the chopped vegetables, and let the vegetables simmer till they are almost cooked.

Add pasta and let cook according to package directions. Add salt and pepper to taste, stirring occasionally.

Top with chopped cilantro and serve.

Makes 6–8 servings

Colombia

Tri-color Rotini Salad with Avocado, Tomato, and Mozzarella

250 grams tri-color rotini
2 tablespoons small almonds
1 tablespoon olive oil
6 tomatoes, ripe but firm
225 grams Mozzarella cheese
1 large avocado
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
3 tablespoons freshly chopped basil
Basil leaves for decoration
Salt and black pepper

DRESSING
6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
Pinch of salt

Toast the almonds in the oven on a baking tray for 1–2 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Boil salted water in a large stock pot and add 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add rotini and cook al dente. Drain the water and rinse rotini with cold water. Drain again and let it cool down.

Slice the tomato and cheese. Peel and slice the avocado, adding drops of lemon juice to avoid oxidation (turning black).

To make the dressing, whisk the oil, vinegar, mustard, and sugar. Season with salt and pepper.

Alternate slices of tomato, cheese, and avocado around the outside of a platter.

Drizzle half of the dressing over the pasta and add chopped basil. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve the pasta in the center of the platter, drizzle on the rest of the dressing. Sprinkle with toasted almonds, decorate with basil leaves and serve immediately.

Makes 4 servings

Costa Rica

Salad with Farfalle, Vegetables and Goat Cheese

1 pound farfalle
¾ pound red and yellow peppers
½ pound small zucchini
3–4 fresh thyme springs
½ bunch fresh basil
¼ cup goat cheese
½ cup pitted green olives
9 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper

Cook the farfalle until al dente. Meanwhile, trim and dice the zucchini, then sauté with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil for several minutes, seasoning with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Cube the goat cheese and set aside. Wash and chop the herbs; set aside. Wash peppers, cut in two and discard seeds and white filaments. Grill peppers and cut them into cubes; set aside.

When the pasta is cooked, rinse in cool water and drain. Put the pasta in a salad bowl, tossing with 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Add zucchini, peppers, aromatic herbs, goat cheese, olives and the rest of oil. Mix and serve.

Makes 4 servings

France

German Style Spätzle

1 onion, chopped
50 grams olive or canola oil
1 leek, cleaned and cut into small pieces
250 grams carrots, diced
250 grams mushrooms
1/8 liter broth or stock
1/4 liter cream
250 grams Spätzle
600 grams ground beef, chicken, or turkey
1 clove garlic
1 bunch parsley
2 eggs
3 tablespoon bread crumbs
Salt and Pepper

Cook the onion in 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large pot until it is soft. Turn off heat and set aside. Meanwhile, blanch the leeks and carrots in salted water for 3 and 4 minutes, respectively, and then rinse in cold water and dry. Wash and cut the mushrooms in half.

Remove half of the cooked onion to a bowl, and return pan to medium heat. Add mushrooms and braise for 5 minutes. Add broth to pan, scraping up browned bits on bottom. Add cream and cook covered, on low, for 15 minutes.

Cook spätzle accordingly to package directions.

Mix meat, reserved onion, eggs, and bread crumbs, salt and pepper into 16 equal sized balls. Fry in remaining 3 tablespoon of oil at medium heat for 10 minutes. Add salt and pepper to vegetable cream sauce, then mix with meatballs. Serve ladled over cooked spätzle.

Makes 4 servings

Germany

Spaghetti with Tomatoes and Basil

1 ½ pounds spaghetti
2 cups tomatoes (preferably San Marzano tomatoes)
2 ½ tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons white onion, minced
10 basil leaves
4 tablespoons Parmigiano Reggiano
Salt and pepper to taste

Dip the tomatoes into boiling water for about ten seconds and place in a bowl of ice water for 1 minute. Remove from ice water, and dry. Peel them, remove the seeds and cut them in slices. In a saucepan, brown the minced onion in the olive oil, then add the tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper. Cook for about ten minutes.

Cook the pasta according to package directions in plenty of salted water, drain and add it to the sauce. Garnish with basil leaves and sprinkle with the grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese before serving.

Makes 4 Servings

Italy

Pasta Salad with Hot Sauce

500 grams vegetabel fusilli
5 tablespoons olive oil
2–3 tablespoons finely minced parsley leaves
1 can tuna
5–6 baby ears of corn, cut into rings
10 small pickled cucumbers, chopped
1 fresh chili pepper
2–3 teaspoons lemon juice
Salt and pepper to taste

Boil fusilli in water with salt and 1 tablespoon olive oil added; rinse with water and drain.

Mix pickled cucumbers, baby corn rings with minced parsley. Add tuna and the desired amount of chili pepper.

Toss the ingredients with the cooked fusilli, add salt, lemon juice, and olive oil.

Makes 4 servings

Iran

Sopa Seca de Fideos

2 pounds fideos (thin pasta)
8 medium tomatoes, blanched and peeled
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
½ white onion, chopped
2-3 cloves garlic, peeled
2 cups chicken stock
Parsley, finely chopped
Grated queso anejo to taste
Avocado slices (optional)

Puree the tomatoes, garlic and onion in the blender until fairly smooth. Heat the olive oil in a large, deep skillet over low heat and add the dry fideos. Stir the fideos until the turn uniformly brown, then remove with slotted spoon and set aside. Add the tomato mixture to the skillet with additional olive oil if necessary, and simmer over medium heat for several minutes. Add ¾ of the chicken stock and bring to a boil. Add the fideos to the tomato-stock mixture, and then bring heat back to low. Add the salt and parsley.

The dish is done when the fideos are cooked and there is no more water in the pan (you may need to add the other ¼ of stock). Stir in the queso and garnish with avocado slices.

Makes 6 Servings

Mexico

Fritos de Massa e Bacalhau

½ pound Alilrea pasta or other kind. cooked al dente
½ pound cod,
Pinch salt and pepper
1 tablespoon diced parsley
1 diced onion
7 tablespoons butter, melted
Bread crumbs
1 tablespoon olive oil, to sauté

Boil cod for 10 minutes and pull apart into pieces. Put the cod pieces into a bowl and mix them with the melted butter. Knead the mixture and add the cooked pasta, little by little.

Add the parsley and onion. Knead everything one more time, season with pepper, and a little salt if needed. With this mixture, form small balls then flatten them.

Coat them with the bread crumbs, and then sauté them in very hot olive oil until browned. When finished cooking, lay them on paper towel to absorb the excess oil.

Makes 4 Servings

Portugal

Linguine with Cocoa Powder

500 grams of egg linguine
250 grams of cottage cheese
75 grams of butter
50 grams of grated Parmesan cheese or Gruyère cheese
1 spoonful of sweet cocoa powder
Salt, pepper and cinnamon to taste

Cook the pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water.

Meanwhile, mix the cottage cheese with the grated Parmesan cheese and keep it warm in the double boiler.

Once the pasta is cooked al dente, drain quickly, place on a large serving dish and add some butter. Place the cottage cheese on top of the pasta, sprinkle with the cocoa powder and a pinch of cinnamon and pepper.

Makes 4 Servings

Spain

Small Cut Pasta with Vegetables

1 packet of small cut pasta (500 grams)
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 clove of garlic, sliced
1 frash onion (green)
2 carrots, chopped and cubed
2 zucchini, chopped and cubed
3 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
200 grams chard (or spinach)
30 grams grated Parmesan cheese
½ bunch fresh dill, chopped
Black pepper and salt

Put oil in a hot pan. Add onion and garlic and sauté for 4 minutes. Add zucchini, carrot, dill, salt, vinegar, and black pepper. Cook 20 minutes more.

Boil pasta with salt in plenty of water and drain.

Boil chard leaves 2-3 min. and then cut into long strips.

Put pasta onto serving dish. Add prepared vegetables. Top with grated Parmesan cheese. Serve.

Makes 4 servings

Turkey

In conclusion:

-Pasta is an affordable food for most of the world's population;

-Pasta meals are present in many regions of our planet as part of their traditional diets;

-Scientific data suggests that eating pasta is associated with healthier food patterns, that also include a higher amount of vegetables and legumes;

-Promoting pasta meals may yield long term health improvements in populations with more "Westernized" food patterns.

-Whole grain pasta may provide even better nutritional profiles to pasta meals