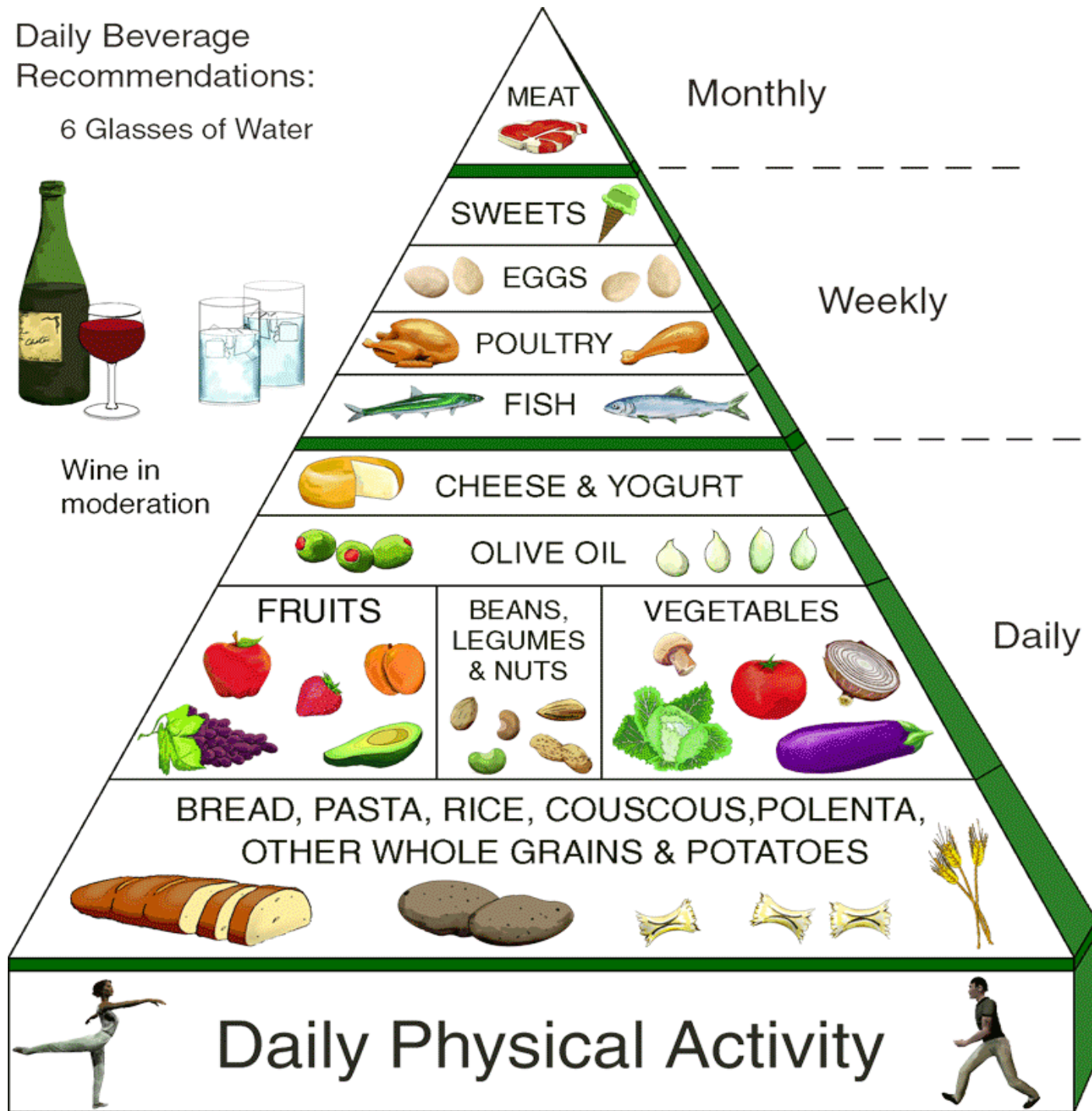


## Mediterranean Food Pyramid



## The Mediterranean diet emphasizes:

- Getting plenty of exercise
- Eating abundant amounts of plant foods ( fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and nuts and seeds),
- Eating minimally processed, seasonally fresh and locally grown foods
- Eating fresh fruits as the typical daily dessert and concentrated sugars, such as cake, cookies or frozen desserts for special occasions
- Using olive oil as the principal source of fat
- Eating low to moderate amounts of dairy products ( mainly cheese and yogurt)
- Eating fewer than 4 eggs/week
- Low intake of red meat
- Using herbs and spices instead of salt to flavor foods
- Eating fish and poultry at least twice a week
- Drinking red wine in moderation with meals(optional)
- The diet also recognizes the importance of enjoying meals with family and friends.

The Mediterranean diet is a delicious and healthy way to eat. Many people who switch to this style of eating say they'll never eat any other way. Here are some specific steps to get you started:

- **Eat your veggies and fruits — and switch to whole grains.** An abundance and variety of plant foods should make up the majority of your meals. They should be minimally processed, and try to purchase them when they're in season. Strive for seven to 10 servings a day of veggies and fruits. Switch to whole-grain bread and cereal, and begin to eat more whole-grain rice and pasta products. Fruit salads are a wonderful way to eat a variety of healthy fruit.
- **Go nuts.** Keep almonds, cashews, pistachios and walnuts on hand for a quick snack. Choose natural peanut butter, rather than the kind with hydrogenated fat added. Try tahini (blended sesame seeds) as a dip or spread for bread.
- **Pass on the butter.** Try olive or canola oil as a healthy replacement for butter or margarine. Use it in cooking. After cooking pasta, add a touch of olive oil, some garlic and green onions for flavoring. Dip bread in flavored olive oil or lightly spread it on whole-grain bread for a tasty alternative to butter. Try tahini (blended sesame seeds) as a dip or spread for bread too.
- **Spice it up.** Herbs and spices make food tasty and are also rich in health-promoting substances. Season your meals with herbs and spices rather than salt.
- **Go fish.** Eat fish once or twice a week. Fresh or water-packed tuna, salmon, trout, mackerel and herring are healthy choices. Grilled fish tastes good and requires little cleanup. Avoid fried fish, unless it's sautéed in a small amount of canola oil.
- **Rein in the red meat.** Substitute fish and poultry for red meat. When eaten, make sure it's lean and keep portions small (about the size of a deck of cards). Also avoid sausage, bacon and other high-fat meats.
- **Choose low-fat dairy.** Limit higher fat dairy products such as whole or 2 percent milk, cheese and ice cream. Switch to skim milk, fat-free yogurt and low-fat cheese.
- **Raise a glass to healthy eating.** If it's OK with your doctor, have a glass of wine at dinner. If you don't drink alcohol, you don't need to start. Drinking purple grape juice may be an alternative to wine.
- **For more information:** [www.mayoclinic.com/health/mediterrandiet](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/mediterrandiet)