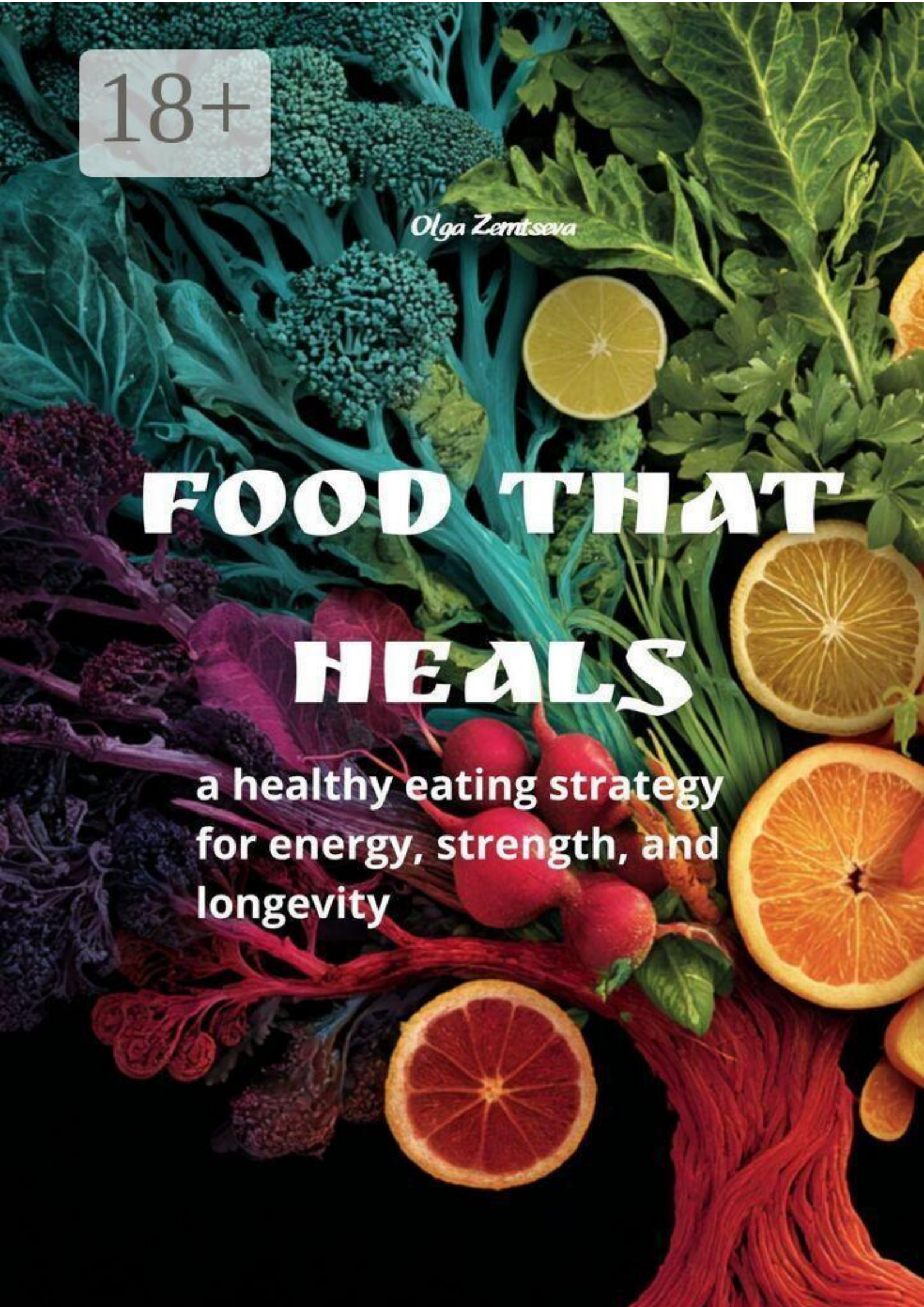




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Olga Zemtseva

FOOD THAT HEALS

a healthy eating strategy
for energy, strength, and
longevity

Olga Zemtseva

**Food That Heals. A healthy
eating strategy for energy,
strength and longevity**

«Издательские решения»

Zemtseva O.

Food That Heals. A healthy eating strategy for energy, strength and longevity / O. Zemtseva — «Издательские решения»,

Food That Heals does not prescribe diets or strict restrictions. Instead, it fosters mindfulness and variety, offering simple strategies that are easy to integrate into your daily routine. You will find advice on how to space out your meals, select the right ingredients, combine flavors, and create dishes that are both enjoyable and beneficial. You will discover that the true power of healthy eating lies in your habits, self-awareness, and the joy of food.

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Food That Heals

A healthy eating strategy for energy, strength and longevity

Olga Zemtseva

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Chapter 1. Healthy Nutrition

Healthy nutrition is a rational and balanced diet that provides the body with all the necessary nutrients in the required amounts. It involves consuming a variety of foods that include proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. Proteins are the building blocks for the body's tissues and cells. They participate in the processes of growth and tissue repair and also serve as a source of energy. Proteins can be obtained from meat, fish, dairy products, eggs, legumes, and nuts. Fats are an important source of energy for the body and are necessary for the absorption of certain vitamins. They help maintain healthy skin and hair and are involved in many processes in the body. Fats can be obtained from fish, nuts, avocado, olive oil, and other foods. Carbohydrates are the main source of energy for the body. They are essential for proper brain and muscle function and help maintain a healthy digestive system. Carbohydrates can be obtained from fruits, vegetables, grains, bread, pasta, and other foods. Vitamins and minerals are micronutrients required for proper body function. Vitamins are involved in many bodily processes, such as immune defense, metabolism regulation, and tissue growth. Minerals contribute to bone formation, balanced metabolism, and other vital functions. They can be obtained from fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, nuts, and grains. Healthy nutrition also involves moderate consumption of sweets, fatty foods, and salty foods. The diet should be diverse and balanced, taking into account the body's needs. Healthy nutrition is the foundation of a healthy lifestyle. It provides the body with essential nutrients that help maintain health and prevent the development of many diseases. This chapter will discuss what healthy nutrition is, which nutrients are necessary for the body, and how they affect our health.

Definition of Healthy Nutrition

Healthy nutrition is primarily a rational, balanced diet that provides the body with all the necessary nutrients in the right amounts. Healthy nutrition does not mean giving up your favorite foods; rather, it emphasizes moderation and variety in your diet.

Nutrients

Nutrients are substances necessary for the growth, development, and maintenance of health. They include proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and other essential substances. Each nutrient plays a specific role in the body, and it is important to obtain them in the correct proportions.

Proteins

Proteins are the main building blocks of our body. They are made up of amino acids and are necessary for growth, repair, and maintenance of body tissues. Proteins can be obtained from various foods such as meat, fish, eggs, legumes, and nuts.

Fats

Fats are a source of energy for the body and are necessary for vitamin absorption, maintaining healthy skin and hair, and proper brain function. Although fats are essential, it is important to consume them in moderation. Fats can be obtained from fish, nuts, avocado, olive oil, and other foods.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the main source of energy for the body. They are also necessary for proper brain and muscle function.

Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamins and minerals are micronutrients necessary for proper body function. Vitamins are involved in many processes in the body, such as immune defense, metabolism regulation, and tissue growth. Minerals contribute to bone formation, balanced metabolism, and other essential functions. They can be obtained from fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, nuts, and grains.

Rational Nutrition

Rational nutrition is a diet that considers the body's nutrient needs. It should be balanced, include a variety of foods, and correspond to the body's requirements depending on sex, age, and physical activity. Rational nutrition also involves eating in moderation and controlling calorie intake.

Rational and balanced nutrition is one of the main principles of healthy eating. It involves consuming diverse and balanced foods that contain all the necessary nutrients. Every day, we should get sufficient amounts of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals to maintain health and well-being.

Balanced nutrition also means eating foods in the correct proportions. For example, carbohydrates should make up about 50% of total calories, fats about 30%, and proteins about 20%. Specific proportions may vary depending on individual needs.

SAOME (Balanced, Adequate, Optimal, Diverse, Natural) is another approach to healthy nutrition. This approach suggests that food should be **balanced**, i.e., contain all necessary nutrients; **adequate**, i.e., meet the body's nutritional needs; **optimal**, i.e., correspond to the needs of a specific person; **diverse**, i.e., include different foods and dishes; and **natural**, i.e., be unprocessed and natural.

It is also important to consider the **caloric content** of food and control its intake. Overeating can lead to weight gain and the development of various diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular conditions.

Overall, **rational and balanced nutrition** is the foundation of a healthy lifestyle. It helps not only to maintain health but also to improve mood and increase energy levels.

Healthy nutrition is the key to a healthy lifestyle. The nutrients we get from food play an important role in our body and affect our health. A rational diet, which includes diverse and balanced foods, helps maintain health and prevent the development of many diseases. In the following chapters, we will learn more about specific nutrients, healthy eating strategies, and diets for specific conditions.

Healthy nutrition is not just a set of «healthy» foods but a whole system where everything matters: food quality, variety, combination of ingredients, and even **meal timing**. A well-structured diet helps maintain energy throughout the day, strengthens immunity, and reduces the risk of many diseases.

Throughout the day, it is optimal to follow a structure of **three main meals and 2—3 light snacks**. Breakfast plays a key role: it «activates» metabolism after the night's rest. Studies show that people who regularly eat breakfast are more likely to maintain a healthy weight and concentrate better.

An ideal breakfast combines **complex carbohydrates** (e.g., oatmeal or whole-grain bread), **protein** (eggs, cottage cheese, yogurt), and **healthy fats** (nuts, seeds, avocado). A properly structured diet is not only about food choices but also about their distribution throughout the day. For example, skipping breakfast may cause the body to enter «energy-saving mode,» increasing the risk of overeating by evening. Research also shows that people who regularly eat breakfast tend to consume fewer calories overall.

Breakfast should be filling and balanced. Examples:

- Oatmeal with berries and nuts + yogurt
- Omelet with vegetables + whole-grain bread
- Cottage cheese with fruits and seeds

Interesting fact: combining protein and fat at breakfast helps maintain satiety longer than fast carbohydrates such as sweet cereals.

Lunch is the main source of energy during the day. It should be as balanced as possible: half of the plate can be vegetables, a quarter protein (fish, poultry, legumes), and another quarter complex carbohydrates (rice, buckwheat, quinoa). This principle is sometimes called the «**plate method**» and is widely used by dietitians worldwide. Lunch is fuel for the second half of the day.

One of the most effective approaches is the «**plate rule**»:

- 50% — vegetables
- 25% — protein
- 25% — complex carbohydrates

Example: baked chicken, buckwheat, and a large vegetable salad with olive oil.

A detail often forgotten: adding **fats** (e.g., oil) helps absorb vitamins A, D, E, and K — without them, vegetables lose part of their benefits.

Dinner is better kept lighter, especially if eaten late. However, the common myth that «you shouldn't eat after 6:00 PM» has no scientific basis — overall diet quality and daily calorie balance matter more. Dinner is best composed of vegetables, lean protein, and a small amount of complex carbohydrates. Dinner is not the enemy but an ally if approached correctly. The myth about «no eating after 6 PM» is outdated. What matters more is **what you eat**.

Example of a good dinner: fish with vegetables or stewed legumes with greens.

Interesting fact: a **protein-rich dinner** can support muscle recovery and even improve sleep quality.

Snacks are not a weakness but a strategy. They help avoid sharp spikes in blood sugar. However, it is important to choose **smart options**:

- Apple + a handful of nuts
- Sugar-free yogurt
- Carrot with hummus

Interesting point: nuts are very calorie-dense, but studies show that people who regularly eat them are less likely to be overweight due to their ability to promote satiety.

Variety is key to real healthy nutrition. The more different foods in the diet, the more micronutrients the body receives.

For example:

- Red foods (tomatoes) — lycopene for the heart
- Orange foods (carrots) — beta-carotene for vision
- Green foods (spinach) — iron and folic acid

Surprising fact: frozen vegetables can sometimes be healthier than fresh ones because they are frozen immediately after harvest, preserving vitamins.

A separate note about **water**: even mild dehydration (just 1—2% fluid loss) can reduce concentration, cause fatigue, and trigger headaches.

Simple guideline: if you feel thirsty, it is already a signal that your body lacks water.

When it comes to **meat and fish**, moderation and quality are important. **Fatty fish** (salmon, mackerel) is rich in omega-3, which supports the heart and brain. **Processed meats** (sausages, hot dogs) should be limited, as they are associated with an increased risk of chronic diseases.

Snacks help maintain stable blood sugar levels and prevent overeating. It is important that they are **nutritious, not «empty»**: fruits, berries, nuts, natural yogurt, or hummus with vegetables are excellent options.

Interesting fact: nuts, despite being high in calories, do **not** contribute to weight gain when eaten in moderation; on the contrary, they can improve metabolism.

Another important detail: it's not just **what you eat**, but **how**. Eating quickly «on the go» often leads to overeating because the brain doesn't receive the signal of satiety in time (this takes about 15—20 minutes).

Ultimately, **healthy eating is not a diet but a lifestyle**. It's about balance, mindfulness, and small but regular choices in favor of your health every day.

A **balanced diet** should include all major food groups: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, protein sources, and dairy or alternatives. **Variety** is key to obtaining all necessary vitamins and minerals.

For example, colorful vegetables contain different antioxidants:

- Carrots are rich in beta-carotene

- Spinach contains iron and folic acid

Consumption of meat and fish is recommended in **moderation**. Fatty fish (e.g., salmon or mackerel) contains beneficial **omega-3 fatty acids**, which support heart and brain health. Prefer **boiling, stewing, or baking** — these cooking methods preserve more nutrients and do not add extra fats.

Do not forget about **water**: it participates in almost all processes in the body. Even mild dehydration can reduce concentration and cause fatigue. On average, an adult needs about 1.5—2 liters of water per day, but requirements may vary.

It is also important to **limit added sugar and salt**. For example, the World Health Organization recommends no more than 5 grams of salt per day — about one teaspoon. Excess sugar consumption is associated with an increased risk of obesity and diabetes.

As we can see, **healthy eating is not about strict restrictions** but a thoughtful and varied approach to food that can be adapted to your tastes and lifestyle.

Healthy nutrition becomes truly valuable when it moves from theory into practice — into your kitchen and daily habits. Even knowing all the principles, it's important to turn them into **real, tasty, and convenient meals** that fit easily into your daily routine.

Many people think that healthy food is complicated, time-consuming, and not always tasty. In reality, it's the opposite: simple combinations of natural products are often not only healthier but also more flavorful.

For example: ordinary oatmeal can become a **complete and diverse breakfast** by adding berries, nuts, and a little honey; baked vegetables with fish can become a **restaurant-style dinner** without extra effort.

The important point: **healthy dishes do not require rare ingredients or complex techniques**. Most recipes can be made from accessible products, and the process takes minimal time. This makes proper nutrition a **sustainable habit**, not a temporary experiment.

In the next section, we will look at examples of simple and tasty recipes that can help you. These dishes are suitable both for those starting a transition to healthy eating and for those who want to add more interesting and nutritious ideas to their menu.

Healthy Recipes

Vegetable Stew with Chicken Breast and Rice

Ingredients:

2 chicken breasts

2 onions

2 carrots

2 peppers

1 eggplant

1 cup rice

2 cups water

Salt, pepper, herbs

Preparation:

Cut chicken breast into cubes and fry until golden brown.

Slice onion into half-rings, carrots and peppers into strips, eggplant into cubes.

Fry onion until translucent, then add the remaining vegetables and cook for 5—7 minutes.

Add chicken, rice, and water. Season with salt and pepper.

Cook covered for 15—20 minutes until the rice is tender. Sprinkle with herbs before serving.

Nutritional value (per 100 g):

Calories: ~110 kcal

Protein: 9 g

Fat: 2 g

Carbohydrates: 14 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamins A, B, C

Potassium, magnesium

Benefits: Supports muscles, provides energy, and improves digestion.

Ideal for everyday meals.

Baked Salmon with Vegetables

Ingredients:

2 salmon fillets

2 zucchinis

2 carrots

1 red and 1 yellow pepper

2 tbsp olive oil

Salt, pepper, lemon juice, herbs

Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 200° C.

Slice the vegetables into strips, rub salmon with spices and lemon juice.

Place vegetables on a baking sheet, top with salmon, drizzle with oil.

Bake for 20—25 minutes.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~180 kcal

Protein: 20 g

Fat: 11 g

Carbohydrates: 6 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Omega-3

Vitamins D, B12

Selenium, potassium

Benefits: Strengthens the heart, improves memory, reduces inflammation, and is beneficial for the skin.

Green Salad with Couscous and Avocado

Ingredients:

1/2 cup couscous

Cucumber, tomato

1 avocado

Lemon

2 tbsp olive oil

Mint, salt, pepper

Preparation:

Cook the couscous.

Chop vegetables and avocado.

Mix all ingredients and dress with lemon juice and olive oil.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~180 kcal

Protein: 4 g

Fat: 9 g

Carbohydrates: 22 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamins E, C

Potassium, folic acid

Benefits: Good for heart, skin, and hormonal balance. Provides long-lasting satiety.

Quinoa Salad with Tuna and Vegetables

Ingredients:

1/2 cup quinoa

1 can of tuna

Pepper, cucumber, red onion

Olive oil, vinegar

Preparation:

Cook the quinoa.

Chop vegetables.

Mix with tuna and dressing.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~160 kcal

Protein: 12 g

Fat: 6 g

Carbohydrates: 18 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Iron, magnesium

B vitamins

Omega-3

Benefits: Increases endurance, supports muscles, and improves brain function.

Tuna Skewers with Vegetables

Ingredients:

500 g tuna

Pepper, zucchini, onion

Olive oil

Soy sauce, lemon juice, honey

Preparation:

Cut ingredients and marinate.

Skewer and grill or bake.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~170 kcal

Protein: 23 g

Fat: 6 g

Carbohydrates: 7 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Iodine, selenium

Vitamins D and B12

Benefits:

Boosts metabolism, supports thyroid health, and aids weight loss.

Quinoa Salad with Chicken, Avocado, and Grapefruit

Ingredients:

Quinoa, chicken

Avocado, grapefruit

Red onion

Olive oil, lemon

Preparation:

Cook quinoa.

Fry chicken and slice.

Add fruits and vegetables, mix with dressing.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~200 kcal

Protein: 15 g

Fat: 9 g

Carbohydrates: 17 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin C

Potassium

Vitamins A and B

Benefits: Strengthens immunity, accelerates metabolism, and aids fat burning.

Fish Pie with Vegetables

Ingredients:

Fish fillet
Broccoli, carrot, onion
Eggs, cream
Salt, pepper, herbs

Preparation:

Fry fish and vegetables.
Mix with eggs and cream, place in a baking dish.
Bake at 180° C for 20—25 minutes.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~210 kcal
Protein: 14 g
Fat: 13 g
Carbohydrates: 6 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Calcium
Vitamin D
Phosphorus

Benefits: Strengthens bones, supports the brain, and provides lasting satiety.

Soup with Chicken Breast and Vegetables

Ingredients:

Chicken breast
Carrot, onion
Potato
Broccoli
Garlic
Salt, pepper, herbs

Preparation:

Cut chicken and lightly fry until golden.
Chop vegetables into cubes and fry until soft.
Transfer everything to a pot, add hot water, garlic, and spices.
Cook 20—30 minutes until vegetables are tender.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~70—90 kcal
Protein: 8 g
Fat: 2 g
Carbohydrates: 6—8 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin C
B vitamins

Potassium, iron

Benefits: Light diet soup — improves digestion, strengthens immunity, and is suitable for weight loss.

Vegetable Lasagna

Ingredients:

Lasagna sheets

Carrot, zucchini, eggplant

Onion, tomatoes

Cheese

Olive oil, salt, pepper

Preparation:

Chop and fry vegetables until soft.

Boil lasagna sheets for 8—10 minutes.

Layer: vegetables → sheets → vegetables → cheese.

Bake at 180° C for 20—25 minutes.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~150—200 kcal

Protein: 6—8 g

Fat: 7—10 g

Carbohydrates: 18—22 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamins A, C

Calcium

Potassium

Benefits: Provides energy, improves digestion, and supports bones thanks to the cheese.

Tuna with Buckwheat and Vegetables

Ingredients:

Tuna fillet

Buckwheat

Carrot, zucchini, onion

Salt, pepper, olive oil

Preparation:

Cook buckwheat.

Fry vegetables.

Fry tuna until cooked (can leave slightly pink inside).

Mix buckwheat with vegetables and serve with tuna.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~160—190 kcal

Protein: 15—20 g

Fat: 5—7 g

Carbohydrates: 15—18 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Iron

Magnesium

Omega-3

B vitamins

Benefits: Strengthens muscles, increases endurance, and improves brain function.

Chicken Kebab with Vegetables

Ingredients:

Chicken fillet
Zucchini, eggplant, pepper, onion
Oil, salt, pepper

Preparation:

Marinate the chicken in oil and spices.
Chop the vegetables.
Skewer the ingredients, alternating pieces.
Grill or cook until done.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~140—170 kcal
Protein: 18—22 g
Fat: 6—8 g
Carbohydrates: 5—7 g

Vitamins and minerals:

B vitamins
Potassium
Magnesium

Benefits: High-protein dish for muscles, helps maintain shape and supports weight loss.

Vegetable Salad with Couscous and Feta

Ingredients:

Couscous
Cucumber, tomatoes
Red onion
Feta
Lemon juice, olive oil

Preparation:

Cook the couscous.
Chop the vegetables.
Mix everything, add feta and dressing.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~180—220 kcal
Protein: 6—8 g
Fat: 9—12 g
Carbohydrates: 20—25 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Calcium
Vitamin C
Potassium

Benefits: Strengthens bones, provides energy, and helps maintain water balance.

Salmon Tartare with Avocado

Ingredients:

Salmon fillet

Avocado

Leek

Lemon juice, oil

Preparation:

Dice the salmon and avocado.

Add leek, spices, and dressing.

Chill for 15—20 minutes.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~200—240 kcal

Protein: 15—18 g

Fat: 14—18 g

Carbohydrates: 3—5 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Omega-3

Vitamin E

Potassium

Benefits: Improves brain function, skin health, and protects the heart.

Broccoli Cream Soup

Ingredients:

Broccoli

Onion, garlic

Cream

Salt, pepper

Preparation:

Sauté onion and garlic.

Add broccoli and cook for 15—20 minutes.

Add cream and blend until smooth.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~90—120 kcal

Protein: 3—5 g

Fat: 6—8 g

Carbohydrates: 6—8 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin C

Vitamin K

Calcium

Benefits: Strengthens immunity and bones, and helps detoxify the body.

Chicken with Couscous and Vegetables

Ingredients:

Chicken fillet
Couscous
Carrot, onion, pepper
Garlic, oil

Preparation:

Fry the chicken. Cook the couscous.
Sauté the vegetables, then mix everything together.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~170—200 kcal
Protein: 14—18 g
Fat: 5—7 g
Carbohydrates: 18—22 g

Vitamins and minerals:

B vitamins
Potassium
Iron

Benefits: Provides energy, strengthens muscles, and improves metabolism.

Zucchini Pancakes

Ingredients:

Zucchini
Eggs
Flour
Oil, salt, pepper

Preparation:

Grate zucchini and mix with egg and flour.
Fry until golden brown.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~120—150 kcal
Protein: 5—7 g
Fat: 6—8 g
Carbohydrates: 10—15 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin C
Potassium
Magnesium

Benefits: Light dish for digestion, supports water balance.

Buckwheat with Vegetables and Feta

Ingredients:

Buckwheat
Carrot, onion, garlic
Feta
Oil, salt, pepper

Preparation:

Cook the buckwheat.

Sauté the vegetables.

Mix with feta and serve.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~170—210 kcal

Protein: 7—9 g

Fat: 7—10 g

Carbohydrates: 20—25 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Iron

Magnesium

Calcium

Benefits: Strengthens blood vessels, improves blood quality, and provides long-lasting satiety.

Tomato Soup with Shrimp

Ingredients:

Tomatoes

Shrimp

Onion, garlic

Cream

Olive oil, salt, pepper

Preparation:

Finely chop the onion and garlic and sauté until golden.

Add tomatoes, pour in water, and cook for 20—25 minutes.

Peel the shrimp and fry until pink.

Blend the soup, add cream and spices.

Serve with shrimp.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~100—130 kcal

Protein: 8—12 g

Fat: 5—7 g

Carbohydrates: 6—9 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin C

Iodine

Selenium

Benefits: Supports immunity, good for the thyroid, and easy to digest.

Stuffed Peppers with Rice and Vegetables

Ingredients:

Bell peppers

Rice

Carrot, onion, garlic

Oil, salt, pepper

Preparation:

Clean and cut the peppers.

Cook the rice. Sauté the vegetables.

Mix rice with vegetables and stuff the peppers.

Bake for 20—25 minutes at 180° C.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~120—150 kcal

Protein: 3—5 g

Fat: 3—5 g

Carbohydrates: 20—25 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin C

Vitamin A

Potassium

Benefits: Strengthens immunity, provides energy, and improves digestion.

Couscous with Vegetables and Feta

Ingredients:

Couscous

Zucchini, eggplant, red onion

Feta

Lemon juice, oil

Preparation:

Cook the couscous.

Sauté the vegetables until soft.

Mix with feta and dressing.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~180—220 kcal

Protein: 6—8 g

Fat: 9—11 g

Carbohydrates: 20—25 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Calcium

Vitamin C

Potassium

Benefits: Supports bones, provides energy, and improves metabolism.

Arugula Salad with Artichokes and Parmesan

Ingredients:

Arugula

Artichokes

Parmesan

Oil, lemon

Preparation:

Chop all ingredients and mix.

Add dressing and spices.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~150—180 kcal

Protein: 6—9 g

Fat: 10—12 g

Carbohydrates: 5—8 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin K

Calcium

Antioxidants

Benefits: Detoxifies the body, improves digestion, and strengthens bones.

Rice Patties with Vegetables

Ingredients:

Rice

Carrot, onion, garlic

Egg, flour

Oil

Preparation:

Cook the rice. Sauté the vegetables.

Mix with egg and flour.

Shape into patties and fry.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~150—180 kcal

Protein: 4—6 g

Fat: 5—7 g

Carbohydrates: 22—26 g

Vitamins and minerals:

B vitamins

Potassium

Magnesium

Benefits: Provides energy and supports the nervous system.

Chicken Salad with Apples and Nuts

Ingredients:

Chicken fillet

Apple

Walnuts

Arugula

Oil, lemon

Preparation:

Fry and chop the chicken.

Mix with apple, nuts, and arugula.

Add dressing.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~180—220 kcal

Protein: 12—15 g

Fat: 10—13 g

Carbohydrates: 8—12 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin C

Omega-3

Magnesium

Benefits: Strengthens heart, brain, and immunity.

Potato Soup with Seafood

Ingredients:

Potatoes

Seafood

Onion

Cream

Preparation:

Cook the potatoes.

Sauté the seafood and onion.

Mix everything and blend with cream.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~120—160 kcal

Protein: 8—12 g

Fat: 6—9 g

Carbohydrates: 10—15 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Iodine

Potassium

Vitamin B12

Benefits: Supports thyroid function and provides energy.

Stuffed Salmon with Vegetables

Ingredients:

Salmon

Carrot, onion, garlic

Lemon

Preparation:

Sauté the vegetables.

Stuff the fish with them.

Bake for 25—30 minutes at 180° C.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~180—220 kcal

Protein: 18—22 g

Fat: 12—15 g

Carbohydrates: 3—5 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Omega-3

Vitamin D

Selenium

Benefits: Supports heart, brain, and skin health.

Chicken Patties with Vegetables

Ingredients:

Chicken fillet

Carrot, onion

Egg, flour

Preparation:

Mince the chicken.

Add vegetables, egg, and flour.

Shape into patties and fry.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~160—190 kcal

Protein: 15—18 g

Fat: 7—9 g

Carbohydrates: 6—10 g

Vitamins and minerals:

B vitamins

Iron

Potassium

Benefits: Strengthens muscles and provides long-lasting satiety.

Ratatouille with Mozzarella

Ingredients:

Eggplant, zucchini, bell pepper

Tomatoes, onion, garlic

Mozzarella

Preparation:

Sauté the vegetables, then bake with mozzarella until melted.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~140—180 kcal

Protein: 6—8 g

Fat: 8—10 g

Carbohydrates: 10—15 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin C

Calcium

Antioxidants

Benefits: Detoxifies the body, improves skin, and supports digestion.

Zucchini Patties

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~120—140 kcal

Protein: 4—6 g

Fat: 6—8 g

Carbohydrates: 10—14 g

Benefits: Light dish for digestion and weight maintenance.

Vegetable Stew with Chicken Breast

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~120—150 kcal

Protein: 10—12 g

Fat: 4—6 g

Carbohydrates: 10—14 g

Vitamins:

Vitamin C

B vitamins

Potassium

Benefits: Balanced dish for energy, immunity, and muscles.

Mushroom and Spinach Risotto

Ingredients:

Rice

Mushrooms

Spinach

Onion, garlic

Cream, Parmesan

Olive oil, salt, pepper

Preparation:

Cook the rice. Sauté onion and garlic.

Add mushrooms, then spinach, and cook until soft.

Add cream, spices, and rice. Mix well.

Sprinkle with Parmesan and bake until golden.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~180—220 kcal

Protein: 6—8 g

Fat: 8—11 g

Carbohydrates: 20—25 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Iron

Calcium

Vitamins A and B

Benefits: Supports blood, bones, and provides energy.

Grilled Salmon with Vegetables

Ingredients:

Salmon

Zucchini, bell pepper, onion, garlic

Lemon, oil

Preparation:

Marinate and grill the vegetables.

Cook the salmon separately until done.

Serve with vegetables and lemon.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~180—210 kcal

Protein: 20 g

Fat: 12 g

Carbohydrates: 5 g

Vitamins:

Omega-3

Vitamin D

Potassium

Benefits: Improves heart and brain health and reduces inflammation.

Fresh Vegetable Salad with Tuna

Ingredients:

Vegetables (cucumber, tomato, carrot, etc.)

Tuna

Oil, vinegar

Preparation:

Chop vegetables and add tuna.

Dress with oil and vinegar.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~120—150 kcal

Protein: 10—14 g

Fat: 5—7 g

Carbohydrates: 6—10 g

Vitamins:

Vitamin C

Omega-3

Magnesium

Benefits: Light protein salad — supports weight loss and energy.

Chicken Soup

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~120—150 kcal

Protein: 10—12 g

Fat: 6—8 g

Carbohydrates: 8—12 g

Vitamins:

B vitamins

Potassium

Iron

Benefits: Strengthens immunity and provides satiety.

Couscous Salad with Chicken and Vegetables

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~180—220 kcal

Protein: 12—15 g

Fat: 6—8 g

Carbohydrates: 20—25 g

Benefits: Balanced macros — ideal for sports and energy.

Tomato Soup with Seafood

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~110—140 kcal

Protein: 10—14 g

Fat: 5—7 g

Carbohydrates: 6—10 g

Vitamins:

Iodine

Selenium

Vitamin C

Benefits:

Supports thyroid and immunity.

Grilled Chicken Steak with Vegetables

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~150—180 kcal

Protein: 18—22 g

Fat: 6—8 g

Carbohydrates: 5—7 g

Benefits: Excellent for muscles and weight loss.

Fish Pie with Vegetables

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~220—260 kcal

Protein: 12—16 g

Fat: 12—16 g

Carbohydrates: 15—20 g

Benefits: Strengthens bones and provides energy.

Beet Salad with Nuts

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~160—200 kcal

Protein: 4—6 g

Fat: 10—13 g

Carbohydrates: 15—20 g

Vitamins:

Iron

Vitamin C

Antioxidants

Benefits: Cleanses blood and improves blood vessels.

Potato Soup with Mushrooms

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~130—170 kcal

Protein: 4—6 g

Fat: 6—9 g

Carbohydrates: 15—20 g

Vitamins:

Potassium

B vitamins

Benefits: Provides energy and supports the nervous system.

Vegetable Stew with Couscous

Ingredients:

Couscous

Eggplant, zucchini, bell pepper

Onion, garlic

Tomatoes, tomato sauce

Olive oil, salt, pepper

Preparation:

Salt the eggplant and leave for a few minutes.

Chop vegetables and sauté onion and garlic.

Add the remaining vegetables and stew until soft.

Add tomato sauce and cook for another 5—7 minutes.

Cook couscous separately and serve with stew.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~160—200 kcal

Protein: 5—7 g

Fat: 6—8 g

Carbohydrates: 22—28 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin C

Potassium

Antioxidants

Benefits: Improves digestion, detoxifies, and provides energy.

Chicken Patties with Zucchini

Ingredients:

Chicken fillet

Zucchini

Onion, garlic

Eggs, flour

Oil, salt, pepper

Preparation:

Mince the chicken. Sauté the vegetables.

Mix everything with egg and flour.

Shape into patties and fry until cooked.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~150—180 kcal

Protein: 15—18 g

Fat: 6—8 g

Carbohydrates: 6—10 g

Vitamins:

B vitamins

Potassium

Iron

Benefits: Supports muscles, provides satiety, and is suitable for weight loss.

Seaweed Salad

Ingredients:

Seaweed

Carrot, onion, garlic

Lemon, oil

Preparation:

Chop the vegetables.

Mix with dressing and add the seaweed.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~80—110 kcal

Protein: 2—4 g

Fat: 4—6 g

Carbohydrates: 8—12 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Iodine

Iron

Vitamin C

Benefits: Supports thyroid function and improves metabolism.

Beef in Sweet and Sour Sauce

Ingredients:

Beef

Onion, garlic

Honey, soy sauce, vinegar

Starch, oil

Preparation:

Fry the beef.

Prepare the sauce (honey, soy sauce, vinegar, starch).

Add the meat and cook for a few more minutes.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~200—250 kcal

Protein: 18—22 g

Fat: 10—14 g

Carbohydrates: 10—15 g

Vitamins:

Iron

B vitamins

Zinc

Benefits: Boosts energy, supports blood health, and strengthens muscles.

Vegetable Omelet

Ingredients:

Eggs
Onion, bell pepper, zucchini
Mushrooms
Oil

Preparation:

Sauté the vegetables.
Pour in the eggs and cook until done.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~130—160 kcal
Protein: 10—12 g
Fat: 9—11 g
Carbohydrates: 4—6 g

Vitamins:

Vitamin D
Vitamin B12
Calcium

Benefits: Supports brain function, strengthens bones, and provides energy for the day.

Fish Soup with Potatoes

Ingredients:

Fish (salmon or cod)
Potatoes
Carrot, onion, garlic
Spices, cream

Preparation:

Boil the vegetables with seasonings.
Add the fish and cook until done.
Add cream at the end.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~120—150 kcal
Protein: 10—14 g
Fat: 5—7 g
Carbohydrates: 10—14 g

Vitamins:

Omega-3
Vitamin D
Potassium

Benefits: Strengthens the heart, immune system, and nervous system.

Chicken with Broccoli in a Pan

Ingredients:

Chicken fillet
Broccoli
Garlic
Olive oil
Salt, pepper

Preparation:

Cut the chicken and fry until golden.
Add broccoli and garlic, cook for 7—10 minutes until tender.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~140—170 kcal
Protein: 18—22 g
Fat: 5—7 g
Carbohydrates: 5—8 g

Vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin C
Vitamin K
Potassium

Benefits: Boosts immunity, promotes muscle growth, and improves metabolism.

Whole Grain Pasta with Vegetables

Ingredients:

Whole grain pasta
Tomatoes
Zucchini
Spinach
Garlic
Olive oil

Preparation:

Cook the pasta.
Sauté the vegetables with garlic.
Mix everything together and serve.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~180—220 kcal
Protein: 6—8 g
Fat: 5—7 g
Carbohydrates: 28—32 g

Vitamins:

B vitamins
Vitamin A
Magnesium

Benefits: Provides energy and improves digestion due to fiber content.

Egg and Avocado Salad

Ingredients:

Eggs
Avocado
Lettuce leaves
Cucumber
Olive oil, lemon

Preparation:

Boil the eggs.
Chop all ingredients and mix with dressing.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~160—200 kcal
Protein: 8—10 g
Fat: 12—15 g
Carbohydrates: 4—6 g

Vitamins:

Vitamin E
Vitamin D
Potassium

Benefits:

Good for skin, heart, and hormonal balance.

Lentil Soup

Ingredients:

Lentils
Carrot
Onion
Garlic
Tomatoes
Spices

Preparation:

Rinse lentils and cook for 20—25 minutes.
Add sautéed vegetables and spices.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~120—150 kcal
Protein: 8—10 g
Fat: 3—5 g
Carbohydrates: 18—22 g

Vitamins:

Iron
Folic acid
Magnesium

Benefits: Strengthens blood, boosts energy, and provides long-lasting satiety.

Baked Potatoes with Yogurt Sauce

Ingredients:

Potatoes
Natural yogurt

Garlic

Herbs

Salt, pepper

Preparation:

Bake the potatoes in the oven until tender.

Mix yogurt with garlic and herbs.

Serve with the sauce.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~130—170 kcal

Protein: 4—6 g

Fat: 3—5 g

Carbohydrates: 22—26 g

Vitamins:

Potassium

Vitamin C

Calcium

Benefits: Supports energy, good for the heart, and aids digestion.

Steamed Cod with Vegetables

Ingredients:

Cod fillet

Broccoli

Carrot

Lemon

Salt, pepper

Preparation:

Steam the fish and vegetables for 15—20 minutes.

Drizzle with lemon juice.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~100—130 kcal

Protein: 18—22 g

Fat: 2—4 g

Carbohydrates: 5—7 g

Vitamins:

Iodine

Vitamin D

Omega-3

Benefits: Supports thyroid function and brain health.

Yogurt with Fruits and Nuts

Ingredients:

Natural yogurt

Berries or fruits

Nuts

Honey

Preparation:

Mix all ingredients in a bowl.

Nutritional value:

Calories: ~140—180 kcal

Protein: 6—8 g

Fat: 6—9 g

Carbohydrates: 15—20 g

Vitamins:

Calcium

Vitamin C

Antioxidants

Benefits: Improves digestion, strengthens bones, and boosts immunity.

Healthy Eating

Healthy eating forms the foundation of a full and active life. It involves consuming foods with high nutritional value that can positively affect the body's condition. Such foods provide essential proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals that ensure the proper functioning of all body systems, support immunity, and contribute to overall well-being.

Every day, the human body undergoes complex processes of cell renewal, and nutrition plays a key role in this. The quality of the food consumed affects energy levels, performance, and even mood. For example, foods rich in B vitamins support normal nervous system function, while foods containing vitamin C strengthen the body's immune defenses.

A healthy diet is diverse. It includes fresh vegetables and fruits, whole-grain products, sources of healthy fats such as nuts and vegetable oils, and protein-rich foods — fish, meat, eggs, and legumes. Water also plays a crucial role, as it is involved in all metabolic processes and helps maintain proper hydration.

Balanced nutrition is especially important. The diet should correspond to an individual's characteristics, including age, level of physical activity, and health status. For example, people with an active lifestyle need more energy and protein, while older adults benefit more from light, easily digestible foods rich in vitamins and minerals.

Scientific research confirms that proper nutrition has a significant impact on human health. It helps reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular conditions. In addition, a balanced diet helps maintain a healthy weight and improves overall quality of life.

However, nutrition is not the only factor determining health and longevity. Genetics, physical activity, environmental conditions, and lifestyle also affect the body's state. For instance, poor environmental conditions and high stress levels can have negative effects even with proper nutrition.

In recent years, a healthy lifestyle has become increasingly popular. More people are consciously choosing foods and striving to improve their diet. This trend is supported by both scientific research and the example of public figures who demonstrate the importance of a balanced diet and regular physical activity.

Special attention should be given to the concept of organic products. These are foods produced without the use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or artificial additives. Such products are considered more environmentally friendly and safer for health, although their benefits largely depend on a person's overall diet and lifestyle. Healthy eating is a crucial element of maintaining health. It promotes the normal functioning of the body, increases energy levels, and reduces the risk of diseases. Combined with physical activity, adequate rest, and a favorable environment, it enables a person to maintain health and a high quality of life over many years.

Healthy eating comes with many interesting facts and practical recommendations that help better understand its importance and apply it in everyday life. Studies show that eating habits develop gradually and are largely influenced by one's surroundings, culture, and lifestyle. For example, it has been proven that regular consumption of vegetables and fruits can significantly reduce the risk of chronic diseases, and a varied diet ensures the intake of a complete range of essential nutrients.

An interesting fact is that the feeling of satiety does not occur immediately but approximately 15—20 minutes after the beginning of a meal. This is why slow and mindful eating helps prevent overeating and promotes better digestion. In addition, meal timing is important: regular meals at the same times help the body function more efficiently and maintain stable energy levels throughout the day. A useful recommendation is to include foods of different colors in the diet. Each color of vegetables and fruits is associated with specific beneficial compounds: green foods are rich in antioxidants and B vitamins, orange and red ones contain carotenoids, and purple foods contain

compounds that support vascular health. Therefore, a variety of colors on the plate is not only aesthetically pleasing but also beneficial.

Another important aspect is adequate water intake. Water participates in metabolism, regulates body temperature, and helps eliminate toxins. Insufficient fluid intake can lead to fatigue, decreased concentration, and a decline in overall well-being. Therefore, it is recommended to drink water regularly throughout the day, even if you are not noticeably thirsty. Special attention should also be paid to cooking methods. Baking, boiling, and steaming are considered healthier compared to frying because they preserve more vitamins and reduce the amount of unnecessary fats. In addition, reducing sugar and salt intake positively affects health by lowering the burden on the cardiovascular system.

An interesting fact is that the human gut is directly connected to the immune system. A significant portion of immune cells is located in the gut, so foods rich in fiber and beneficial bacteria, such as vegetables, fruits, and fermented dairy products, play an important role in maintaining health. Planning meals in advance is also a useful tip. It helps avoid choosing less healthy foods by chance and encourages a more conscious approach to eating. It is also important to pay attention to product ingredients, preferring natural components and minimally processed foods.

As we can see, following simple rules and understanding the characteristics of nutrition allows not only improving health but also enhancing the quality of life. Gradually adopting healthy habits makes the transition to a healthier lifestyle more comfortable and sustainable. Organic products have gradually taken a special place in the life of people striving for a more mindful and careful approach to their health. Their history does not begin with fashion but with a return to natural farming methods — those used long before industrial food production emerged.

The basis of the organic approach is a simple but important idea: to grow food in harmony with nature. This means avoiding synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, growth hormones, and other chemicals. Instead, farmers use compost, natural fertilizers, crop rotation, and even manual labor to protect plants. Sometimes pests are removed by hand or controlled using biological methods, such as attracting beneficial insects.

Doctors and nutrition specialists often note that this approach matters not only for the environment but also for human health. Many dietitians emphasize that reducing the number of chemicals in food lessens the burden on the body. In clinical practice, it is often said that «the closer a product is to its natural state, the easier it is for the body to digest.» Interestingly, organic products undergo strict verification. To obtain the corresponding label, producers must prove that all stages — from cultivation to packaging — comply with established standards. This is not just a label on packaging but the result of regular inspections and quality control.

There is a common belief that organic food tastes better. There is some truth to this: studies show that the slow growth of plants and the absence of chemical stimulants can affect the concentration of flavor and aromatic compounds. That is why, for example, organic vegetables often have a richer taste.

However, it is important to understand the practical side as well. Organic products require more time and resources to produce, which is why their cost is usually higher. In addition, they are closely linked to seasonality. In summer, the selection is significantly wider, while in winter the variety may be limited. Doctors advise viewing this not as a drawback but as an advantage: seasonal eating better aligns with the body's needs at different times of the year. Among useful recommendations, specialists often highlight a few simple but effective rules. It is not necessary to switch entirely to organic products — starting with the most commonly consumed vegetables and fruits is enough. It is also recommended to pay attention to local farm products, which are often fresher and require less transportation time.

An interesting fact is that even a small increase in the proportion of natural products in the diet can have a positive effect on well-being. People often notice improved digestion, higher energy levels, and an overall feeling of lightness. Thus, organic products are not just a trend but part of a broader

lifestyle approach, where the quality of nutrition, health care, and respect for the environment are important. They are not the only requirement for proper nutrition, but they can become an important step toward a more mindful and balanced way of life.

Chapter 2. The Mediterranean Diet and Recipes

The Mediterranean diet was not born in laboratories or on the pages of scientific journals. It emerged in the sunlit kitchens of Italy, Greece, and Spain — places where food has long been more than a way to satisfy hunger; it is a cornerstone of culture, connection, and daily life itself. Imagine a warm evening by the sea: a table laden with fresh vegetables, fragrant olive oil, fish just lifted from the fire, and a slice of whole-grain bread. It was in precisely this atmosphere that one of the world's healthiest dietary traditions took shape.

Scientists began to study this way of eating in earnest during the mid-twentieth century, when American researcher Ancel Keys observed a remarkable phenomenon: people living in Mediterranean countries suffered from cardiovascular disease far less frequently than many other populations. As he noted, «People eat simply, yet they live longer — there is a profound pattern in that.» Since then, the Mediterranean diet has become a symbol of healthy longevity.

At its heart lies an abundance of vegetables and fruits. They enrich the diet with vitamins, antioxidants, and dietary fiber. Physicians often repeat a simple rule: the more colorful the plate, the healthier the meal. It is no coincidence that the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates famously said, «Let food be thy medicine.» Within the Mediterranean diet, those words acquire a particularly powerful meaning.

Healthy fats play an equally important role. Olive oil, fish, and nuts provide unsaturated fatty acids that help support cardiovascular health. Cardiologists note that regular consumption of these fats can lower levels of «bad» cholesterol. One study found that individuals who follow this dietary pattern face a significantly lower risk of heart attack.

Protein-rich foods occupy a balanced and moderate place in the Mediterranean diet. Fish, seafood, eggs, and poultry are consumed regularly, yet without excess. Red meat appears on the table less often, reducing the strain on the body. This approach reflects an old wisdom: quality matters more than quantity.

Special emphasis is also placed on fiber-rich foods such as legumes, whole grains, and vegetables. Not only do they promote healthy digestion, but they also help maintain stable blood sugar levels. Modern nutritionists emphasize that dietary fiber plays a crucial role in preventing both diabetes and obesity.

Another fascinating aspect of the Mediterranean lifestyle is its attitude toward food itself. In Mediterranean countries, meals are not rushed. People eat slowly, savoring both the flavors and the company around them. As the French gastronome Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin once wrote, «Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are.» In the context of this diet, one might add: tell me how you eat, and I will tell you how you live.

Moderate wine consumption, most often with dinner, is also traditionally accepted. Yet physicians emphasize that the key word is moderation. A single glass may be part of a cherished tradition, but it should never become a habit that leads to excessive consumption.

The benefits of the Mediterranean diet have been confirmed by numerous scientific studies. It has been associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes, and even certain neurodegenerative disorders. Researchers have also highlighted its positive effects on the brain: following this dietary pattern may improve memory and lower the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. Some studies further suggest that it contributes to greater emotional well-being and a more stable mood.

More than a diet, the Mediterranean way of eating represents a philosophy of life — one that values balance, simplicity, fresh ingredients, and the pleasure of sharing meals with others. Perhaps that is why it continues to be regarded not merely as a nutritional plan, but as a timeless path toward health and longevity.

Interestingly, the Mediterranean diet is not a rigid set of rules but rather a way of life. It embraces variety, flexibility, and balance. Its foundation consists of simple, wholesome, and widely accessible foods: fresh vegetables and fruits, whole-grain bread, rice, pasta, nuts, fish, cheese, yogurt, and, of course, olive oil. What matters most is not strict adherence to a list of ingredients but the principles behind them — naturalness, moderation, and diversity.

Of course, this approach has its own challenges. In regions far removed from the Mediterranean coast, it is not always easy to find equally fresh ingredients or maintain traditional eating habits. In addition, individuals with allergies to fish or nuts require a more personalized approach. For this reason, healthcare professionals recommend adapting the diet to local conditions and individual needs.

Ultimately, the Mediterranean diet is far more than a collection of nutritional guidelines — it is a philosophy of living. It teaches us to choose simple, natural foods, to enjoy our meals, and to care for our health without extremes. Perhaps it is this harmony between flavor, nourishment, and lifestyle that holds the secret of longevity spoken of by both ancient philosophers and modern scientists.

Examples of Dishes Suitable for the Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean diet was not born in laboratories or on the pages of scientific journals. It emerged in the sun-drenched kitchens of Italy, Greece, and Spain — places where food has always been more than a means of satisfying hunger. It is woven into culture, conversation, family, and everyday life. Picture a warm evening by the sea: a table adorned with fresh vegetables, fragrant olive oil, fish freshly grilled over an open flame, and a slice of rustic whole-grain bread. It was in just such a setting that one of the healthiest dietary traditions in the world was shaped.

Scientists began to study this way of eating seriously in the middle of the twentieth century, when American researcher Ancel Keys observed a remarkable pattern: people living in Mediterranean regions suffered far less frequently from cardiovascular disease. As he once wrote, «People eat simply, yet they live longer — there is a profound order in that.» Since then, the Mediterranean diet has become a global symbol of healthy aging and longevity.

Its foundation is an abundance of fruits and vegetables. These foods enrich the diet with vitamins, antioxidants, and dietary fiber. Physicians often repeat a simple rule: the more colorful the plate, the healthier the meal. It is no coincidence that the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates advised, «Let food be thy medicine.» Within the Mediterranean lifestyle, those timeless words acquire special significance.

Equally important are healthy fats. Olive oil, fish, and nuts provide unsaturated fatty acids that help support cardiovascular health. Cardiologists note that regular consumption of these fats can reduce levels of «bad» cholesterol. One large observational study revealed that the inhabitants of Crete, whose cuisine relies heavily on olive oil, have some of the lowest rates of cardiovascular disease in Europe.

Protein-rich foods occupy a balanced and moderate place in this dietary pattern. Fish, seafood, eggs, and poultry are enjoyed regularly but without excess. Red meat appears on the table less frequently, reducing strain on the body and supporting overall health. This approach reflects an age-old wisdom: less, but better.

Particular emphasis is placed on fiber-rich foods such as legumes, whole grains, and vegetables. These foods not only improve digestion but also help maintain stable blood sugar levels. Modern nutrition experts emphasize that dietary fiber plays a crucial role in preventing diabetes and obesity.

Another fascinating aspect of the Mediterranean lifestyle is its attitude toward food itself. In Mediterranean countries, meals are not rushed. Eating is a leisurely experience meant to be savored. People take time to appreciate flavors, aromas, and conversation. The French gastronome Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin once famously remarked, «Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are.» In this context, one might add: tell me how you eat, and it becomes clear how you live.

There is a charming tradition in many small Italian villages where older residents gather around a shared table every day. Their meals are simple — vegetables, bread, a little cheese, and fish — but they enjoy them together, calmly and with genuine pleasure. Researchers suggest that this combination of nutritious food and meaningful social interaction contributes significantly to their remarkable longevity.

Moderate wine consumption, usually with dinner, is also part of the tradition. Yet physicians emphasize that the key word is moderation. A single glass may be a cherished cultural custom, but it should never become a daily necessity.

The benefits of the Mediterranean diet have been confirmed by numerous scientific studies. It has been associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes, and even certain neurodegenerative conditions. Researchers have also highlighted its positive influence on brain health. Following this dietary pattern may improve memory and reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. Some studies suggest that it may also contribute to greater emotional resilience and a more stable mood.

Nutrition specialists often recommend several simple yet highly effective habits inspired by Mediterranean traditions. For example, beginning the day with a breakfast rich in protein and fiber rather than sugary foods. Adding olive oil not only to salads but also to prepared dishes can improve the absorption of essential vitamins. Choosing seasonal produce whenever possible ensures a higher concentration of nutrients. And perhaps most importantly, taking time to eat mindfully allows people to appreciate both the flavors and the experience itself.

Another intriguing observation is that individuals who follow this way of eating tend to experience fewer dramatic fluctuations in energy levels. Because their meals help maintain stable blood sugar levels, they often report reduced fatigue, improved concentration, and a greater sense of well-being throughout the day.

Naturally, this lifestyle is not without its challenges. In parts of the world far from the Mediterranean coast, obtaining the same quality of fresh ingredients can be difficult. Cultural eating habits may also differ considerably. Furthermore, people with allergies to fish, seafood, or nuts require individualized adjustments. For this reason, healthcare professionals encourage adapting Mediterranean principles to local circumstances and personal health needs.

In the end, the Mediterranean diet is much more than a nutritional strategy — it is a philosophy of life. It encourages us to choose simple and natural foods, enjoy our meals, value moments of connection with others, and care for our health without obsession or extremes. Perhaps it is within this balance of pleasure, nourishment, and lifestyle that one of the greatest secrets of longevity resides — a secret contemplated by ancient thinkers and explored by modern science alike.

Here are several delicious recipes that perfectly reflect the principles of the Mediterranean diet:

Zucchini and Feta Salad

Ingredients (Serves 2):

- 1 zucchini
- 10 cherry tomatoes
- 1 cucumber
- 2 handfuls of spinach leaves
- 50 g feta cheese
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp pine nuts
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Slice the zucchini into thin strips and lightly grill until golden brown. Slice the cherry tomatoes and cucumber. Combine the vegetables with the spinach and add the pine nuts.

Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice, then crumble feta cheese over the top.

Nutritional Value:

Calories: ~250 kcal

Vitamins and Minerals:

Vitamin A, C, K, magnesium, calcium, antioxidants

Fat:

14 g (healthy monounsaturated fats from olive oil and feta)

Benefits:

Supports heart health, promotes healthy vision, and strengthens bones and the immune system.

2. Salmon Fillet with Lemon and Rosemary

Ingredients (Serves 2):

300 g salmon fillet

1 lemon

1 tbsp olive oil

2 garlic cloves

1 sprig rosemary

Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Rub the salmon fillet with garlic, salt, and pepper, then drizzle with olive oil.

Place lemon slices and rosemary on top.

Bake at 180° C (350° F) for 15—20 minutes.

Nutritional Value:

Calories: ~350 kcal

Vitamins and Minerals:

Vitamin D, Vitamin B12, omega-3 fatty acids, selenium

Fat:

20 g (healthy fats from fish and olive oil)

Benefits:

Supports cardiovascular health, enhances brain function, strengthens bones, and helps reduce inflammation.

Quinoa with Vegetables and Olives

Ingredients (Serves 2):

100 g quinoa

1 bell pepper

1 zucchini

2 tomatoes

8—10 olives

1 tbsp olive oil

1 garlic clove

Salt, pepper, and dried herbs to taste

Preparation:

Cook the quinoa until tender.

Dice the vegetables and lightly sauté them in olive oil with garlic.

Combine the quinoa with the vegetables and olives and season with herbs.

Nutritional Value:

Calories: ~280 kcal

Vitamins and Minerals:

Vitamin C, Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, magnesium, potassium, dietary fiber

Fat:

10 g (healthy plant-based fats)

Benefits:

Supports digestion, helps lower cholesterol levels, and provides lasting energy without overburdening the digestive system.

Whole-Wheat Pasta with Tomatoes and Basil

Ingredients (Serves 2):

150 g whole-wheat pasta

3 tomatoes

1 onion

2 garlic cloves

1 bunch fresh basil

1 tbsp olive oil

20 g Parmesan cheese

Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Cook the pasta until al dente.

Sauté the onion and garlic in olive oil. Add the chopped tomatoes and simmer for 5—7 minutes.

Combine the pasta with the sauce, add basil, and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Nutritional Value:

Calories: ~320 kcal

Vitamins and Minerals:

Vitamin A, C, K, iron, dietary fiber

Fat:

12 g (healthy plant-based fats)

Benefits:

Supports heart health, improves digestion, and supplies the body with antioxidants.

Mediterranean Fruit Salad with Nuts

Ingredients (Serves 2):

1 orange

1/2 pomegranate

1 apple

20 g walnuts

1 tsp honey

1 tsp lemon juice

Preparation:

Dice the fruit and place it in a bowl.

Sprinkle with walnuts and drizzle with honey and lemon juice.

Nutritional Value:

Calories: ~180 kcal

Vitamins and Minerals:

Vitamin C, antioxidants, dietary fiber, potassium, magnesium

Fat:

8 g (healthy fats from walnuts)

Benefits:

Strengthens the immune system, supports heart health, and helps slow cellular aging.

Greek Yogurt with Pomegranate and Almonds

Ingredients (1 serving)

Greek yogurt — 150 g

Pomegranate — 50 g (seeds)

Almonds — 15 g

Honey — 1 tsp (5 g)

Preparation

Place the yogurt in a bowl.

Add the pomegranate seeds and chopped almonds.

Drizzle with honey.

Calories: ~320 kcal

Benefits: calcium, protein, vitamin E, antioxidants, healthy fats.

Hummus with Carrot and Cucumber

Ingredients (1 serving)

Cooked chickpeas — 100 g

Tahini — 1 tsp

Lemon juice — 1 tsp

Garlic — ½ clove

Carrot and cucumber — 100 g

Olive oil — 1 tsp

Preparation

Blend the chickpeas with tahini, lemon juice, garlic, and olive oil until smooth and creamy.

Cut the vegetables into sticks.

Serve with the hummus.

Calories: ~150 kcal

Benefits: fiber, protein, antioxidants, B vitamins.

Tuna and Quinoa Salad

Ingredients (1 serving)

Quinoa — 50 g (dry)

Tuna in its own juice — 100 g

Arugula — 50 g

Cherry tomatoes — 50 g

Olives — 10 g

Lemon juice and olive oil — 1 tsp

Preparation

Cook the quinoa until tender.

Mix all ingredients together and dress with olive oil and lemon juice.

Calories: ~450 kcal

Benefits: omega-3, iron, vitamin C, protein, fiber.

Baked Chicken with Eggplant and Bulgur

Ingredients (1 serving)

Chicken breast — 150 g

Eggplant — 100 g

Tomatoes — 50 g

Olive oil — 1 tbsp

Bulgur — 50 g

Preparation

Slice the eggplant and tomatoes and place them in a baking dish.

Place the chicken on top and drizzle with olive oil.

Bake for 25—30 minutes at 180° C.

Cook the bulgur and serve together with the chicken and vegetables.

Calories: ~500 kcal

Benefits: protein, fiber, antioxidants, vitamins A and B6.

Oatmeal with Figs and Chia Seeds

Ingredients (1 serving)

Rolled oats — 50 g

Almond milk — 200 ml

Dried figs — 30 g

Chia seeds — 1 tsp

Preparation

Cook the oatmeal in almond milk for 5—7 minutes.

Add the chopped figs and chia seeds.

Calories: ~350 kcal

Benefits: fiber, omega-3, magnesium, B vitamins.

Baked Cod with Broccoli

Ingredients (1 serving)

Cod fillet — 150 g

Broccoli — 100 g

Potatoes — 100 g

Olive oil — 1 tsp

Preparation

Drizzle the cod fillet with olive oil, season with salt, and bake for 15—20 minutes at 180° C.

Boil the broccoli and potatoes and serve with the fish.

Calories: ~500 kcal

Benefits: protein, vitamin D, fiber, vitamin C.

Stuffed Bell Peppers with Chickpeas and Bulgur

Ingredients (1 serving)

Bell peppers — 2 pcs

Bulgur — 50 g

Chickpeas — 50 g

Onion — 30 g

Tomato paste — 1 tbsp

Olive oil — 1 tsp

Preparation

Cook the bulgur and chickpeas.

Sauté the onion with tomato paste and mix with the bulgur and chickpeas.

Stuff the peppers with the mixture and bake for 20 minutes at 180° C.

Calories: ~480 kcal

Benefits: fiber, protein, antioxidants, vitamin C.

Couscous Salad with Avocado and Shrimp

Ingredients (1 serving)

Couscous — 50 g

Shrimp — 100 g

Avocado — 50 g

Cherry tomatoes — 50 g

Olive oil — 1 tsp

Lemon juice — 1 tsp

Preparation

Cook the couscous according to package instructions.

Sauté the shrimp for 3—4 minutes until pink.

Mix the couscous with the shrimp, diced avocado, and tomatoes.

Dress with olive oil and lemon juice.

Calories: ~420 kcal

Benefits: protein, omega-3, fiber, vitamin C, healthy fats.

Baked Eggplants with Tomatoes and Feta

Ingredients (1 serving)

Eggplant — 150 g

Tomatoes — 100 g

Feta cheese — 30 g

Olive oil — 1 tbsp

Garlic — 1 clove

Preparation

Slice the eggplant into rounds and bake for 10 minutes at 180° C.

Add the tomatoes, garlic, and crumbled feta, then bake for another 10 minutes.

Drizzle with olive oil before serving.

Calories: ~350 kcal

Benefits: fiber, protein, antioxidants, vitamin E.

Vegetable Stew with Chickpeas

Ingredients (1 serving)

Cooked chickpeas — 100 g

Zucchini — 100 g

Bell pepper — 100 g

Onion — 30 g

Tomato paste — 1 tbsp

Olive oil — 1 tsp

Preparation

Sauté the onion with tomato paste.

Add the chopped vegetables and simmer for 10—15 minutes.

Add the chickpeas, stir, and heat through for 5 minutes.

Calories: ~400 kcal

Benefits: fiber, protein, antioxidants, vitamins A and C.

Spinach Salad with Orange and Walnuts

Ingredients (1 serving)

Spinach — 50 g

Orange — 1 pc

Walnuts — 15 g

Olive oil — 1 tsp

Lemon juice — 1 tsp

Preparation

Wash the spinach and cut the orange into segments.

Mix with the walnuts.

Dress with olive oil and lemon juice.

Calories: ~200 kcal

Benefits: fiber, vitamin C, omega-3, antioxidants.

Pasta with Tomato Sauce and Basil

Ingredients (1 serving)

Durum wheat pasta — 70 g

Tomatoes — 150 g

Garlic — 1 clove

Fresh basil — 5 g

Olive oil — 1 tsp

Preparation

Cook the pasta until done.

Sauté the garlic, add the tomatoes, and simmer for 5—7 minutes.

Mix with the pasta and sprinkle with basil.

Calories: ~400 kcal

Benefits: fiber, antioxidants, vitamin C, vitamin K.

Chicken Fillet with Lemon and Rosemary

Ingredients (1 serving)

Chicken breast — 150 g

Lemon — ½ pc

Rosemary — 1 sprig

Olive oil — 1 tsp

Preparation

Drizzle the chicken with lemon juice and olive oil and sprinkle with rosemary.

Bake for 20—25 minutes at 180° C.

Calories: ~250 kcal

Benefits: protein, vitamin B6, antioxidants, healthy fats.

Grilled Salmon with Vegetables

Ingredients (1 serving)

Salmon fillet — 150 g

Zucchini — 100 g

Bell pepper — 50 g

Olive oil — 1 tsp

Preparation

Season the salmon with salt and pepper and grill for 8—10 minutes.

Sauté the vegetables in olive oil.

Serve together.

Calories: ~500 kcal

Benefits: omega-3, protein, vitamin D, antioxidants, fiber.

And as a bonus, 25 highly original and unusual Mediterranean-style recipes featuring interesting combinations, unconventional ingredients, vibrant flavors, and health benefits.

Watermelon, Feta, and Mint Salad

Ingredients (1 serving)

Watermelon — 150 g

Feta cheese — 30 g

Fresh mint — 5 g

Olive oil — 1 tsp

Lime juice — 1 tsp

Preparation

Cut the watermelon into cubes.

Add crumbled feta and chopped mint.

Dress with olive oil and lime juice.

Calories: ~250 kcal

Benefits: antioxidants, fiber, protein, vitamin C, healthy fats.

Pasta with Tomato Sauce and Basil

Ingredients (1 serving)

Durum wheat pasta 70 g

Tomatoes 150 g

Garlic 1 clove

Fresh basil 5 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Cook the pasta until done

Sauté the garlic, add the tomatoes and simmer for 5—7 min

Mix with the pasta and sprinkle with basil

Calories ~400 kcal

Benefits: fiber, antioxidants, vitamin C, vitamin K

Chicken Fillet with Lemon and Rosemary

Ingredients (1 serving)

Chicken breast 150 g

Lemon 1/2 pc.

Rosemary 1 sprig

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Drizzle the chicken with lemon juice and olive oil, sprinkle with rosemary

Bake for 20—25 min at 180° C

Calories ~250 kcal

Benefits: protein, vitamin B6, antioxidants, healthy fats

Grilled Salmon with Vegetables

Ingredients (1 serving)

Salmon fillet 150 g

Zucchini 100 g

Bell pepper 50 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Season the salmon with salt and pepper, grill for 8—10 min

Sauté the vegetables in olive oil

Serve together

Calories ~500 kcal

Benefits: omega-3, protein, vitamin D, antioxidants, fiber

And as a gift, 25 very original and unusual recipes in the «Mediterraneo» style, featuring interesting combinations, unconventional ingredients, vibrant flavors, and preserved health benefits.

Watermelon, Feta and Mint Salad

Ingredients (1 serving)

Watermelon 150 g

Feta cheese 30 g

Fresh mint 5 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Lime juice 1 tsp

Preparation

Cut the watermelon into cubes

Add crumbled feta and chopped mint

Dress with olive oil and lime juice

Calories ~250 kcal

Benefits: antioxidants, fiber, protein, vitamin C, healthy fats

Baked Mini Peppers with Couscous and Pomegranate

Ingredients (1 serving)

Mini peppers 4 pcs.

Couscous 50 g

Pomegranate 30 g

Onion 30 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Cook the couscous

Sauté the onion and mix with the couscous

Stuff the mini peppers with the mixture and bake for 15 min at 180° C

Sprinkle with pomegranate seeds before serving

Calories ~320 kcal

Benefits: fiber, protein, antioxidants, vitamin C

Creamy Pumpkin Soup with Ginger and Orange

Ingredients (1 serving)

Pumpkin 200 g

Onion 30 g

Ginger 5 g

Orange juice 50 ml

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Sauté the onion with the ginger

Add the chopped pumpkin and water, cook until soft

Blend into a purée and add the orange juice

Dress with olive oil

Calories ~220 kcal

Benefits: beta-carotene, antioxidants, vitamin C, fiber

Warm Beetroot, Goat Cheese and Arugula Salad

Ingredients (1 serving)

Beetroot 150 g

Goat cheese 30 g

Arugula 50 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Balsamic vinegar 1 tsp

Preparation

Bake the beetroot for 25—30 min at 180° C, then cut into cubes

Mix with arugula and crumbled cheese

Dress with olive oil and balsamic vinegar

Calories ~280 kcal

Benefits: fiber, antioxidants, protein, vitamin K

Pasta with Avocado, Lemon and Green Pea Cream

Ingredients (1 serving)

Durum wheat pasta 70 g

Avocado 50 g

Green peas 50 g

Lemon juice 1 tsp

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Cook the pasta

Blend the avocado with lemon juice and olive oil into a purée

Mix the pasta with the purée and add the cooked peas

Calories ~400 kcal

Benefits: fiber, omega-3, vitamin C, protein

Chicken with Figs and Olives

Ingredients (1 serving)

Chicken breast 150 g

Dried figs 30 g

Olives 20 g

Olive oil 1 tbsp

Preparation

Sauté the chicken until golden brown

Add the chopped figs and olives, simmer for 5—7 min

Serve with fresh herbs

Calories ~450 kcal

Benefits: protein, fiber, antioxidants, vitamin B6

Warm Artichoke, Cherry Tomato and Parmesan Salad

Ingredients (1 serving)

Canned artichokes 100 g

Cherry tomatoes 50 g

Parmesan cheese 20 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Sauté the artichokes for 5 min

Add the cherry tomatoes and heat for another 3 min

Mix with grated Parmesan and serve

Calories ~300 kcal

Benefits: fiber, protein, antioxidants, vitamin C

Zucchini Spaghetti with Parsley and Almond Pesto

Ingredients (1 serving)

Zucchini 200 g

Parsley 20 g

Almonds 15 g

Olive oil 1 tbsp

Garlic 1 clove

Preparation

Cut the zucchini into spirals

Blend the parsley, almonds, garlic and olive oil into a pesto

Mix the zucchini with the pesto and warm slightly

Calories ~250 kcal

Benefits: fiber, vitamin C, antioxidants, healthy fats

Fig, Prosciutto and Arugula Salad

Ingredients (1 serving)

Fresh figs 2 pcs.

Prosciutto 30 g

Arugula 50 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Balsamic vinegar 1 tsp

Preparation

Slice the figs into wedges

Arrange on arugula and add the prosciutto

Dress with olive oil and balsamic vinegar

Calories ~300 kcal

Benefits: antioxidants, protein, fiber, vitamin C, healthy fats

Baked Salmon with Orange and Fennel

Ingredients (1 serving)

Salmon fillet 150 g

Orange 50 g

Fennel 100 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Drizzle the salmon fillet with olive oil

Arrange orange slices and sliced fennel around it

Bake for 15—20 min at 180° C

Calories ~480 kcal

Benefits: omega-3, protein, vitamin C, antioxidants, fiber

Quinoa with Fried Eggplant and Pine Nuts

Ingredients (1 serving)

Quinoa 50 g

Eggplant 100 g

Pine nuts 15 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Cook the quinoa

Fry the eggplant until golden brown

Mix with the quinoa and sprinkle with pine nuts

Calories ~400 kcal

Benefits: fiber, protein, antioxidants, vitamin E

Grapefruit, Avocado and Shrimp Salad

Ingredients (1 serving)

Grapefruit 1 pc.

Avocado 50 g

Shrimp 100 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Peel the grapefruit and cut it into segments

Mix with the avocado and shrimp

Dress with olive oil

Calories ~350 kcal

Benefits: vitamin C, fiber, omega-3, protein

Stuffed Zucchini with Tomatoes and Feta

Ingredients (1 serving)

Zucchini 2 pcs.

Tomatoes 100 g

Feta cheese 30 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Cut the zucchini lengthwise and remove the core

Mix the chopped tomatoes with feta

Stuff the zucchini and bake for 15—20 min at 180° C

Calories ~350 kcal

Benefits: fiber, protein, antioxidants, vitamin C

Cod Fish Cakes with Lemon and Parsley

Ingredients (1 serving, 2 fish cakes)

Cod fillet 150 g

Lemon juice 1 tsp

Parsley 10 g

Egg 1 pc.

Olive oil 1 tsp for frying

Preparation

Mince the cod fillet and mix with the egg, parsley and lemon juice

Shape into fish cakes and fry for 3—4 min on each side

Calories ~300 kcal

Benefits: protein, omega-3, vitamin C, antioxidants

Artichoke Salad with Almonds and Orange

Ingredients (1 serving)

Canned artichokes 100 g

Orange 1 pc.

Almonds 15 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Slice the artichokes and orange

Mix with chopped almonds

Dress with olive oil

Calories ~280 kcal

Benefits: fiber, protein, antioxidants, vitamin C, healthy fats

Zucchini Baked with Goat Cheese and Thyme

Ingredients (1 serving)

Zucchini 150 g

Goat cheese 30 g

Fresh thyme 5 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Slice the zucchini into rounds and place in a baking dish

Sprinkle with crumbled goat cheese and thyme

Bake for 15—20 min at 180° C

Calories ~250 kcal

Benefits: fiber, protein, antioxidants

Mango, Avocado and Walnut Salad

Ingredients (1 serving)

Mango 100 g

Avocado 50 g

Walnuts 15 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Lime juice 1 tsp

Preparation

Cut the mango and avocado into cubes

Mix with the walnuts

Dress with olive oil and lime juice

Calories ~320 kcal

Benefits: antioxidants, fiber, omega-3, vitamin C, healthy fats

Baked Trout with Lemon and Rosemary

Ingredients (1 serving)

Trout 150 g

Lemon 1/2 pc.

Rosemary 1 sprig

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Drizzle the fish with lemon juice and olive oil

Sprinkle with rosemary

Bake for 15—20 min at 180° C

Calories ~450 kcal

Benefits: protein, omega-3, vitamin D, antioxidants

Quinoa Salad with Roasted Beetroot and Pine Nuts

Ingredients (1 serving)

Quinoa 50 g

Beetroot 100 g

Pine nuts 15 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Cook the quinoa

Roast the beetroot for 25 min at 180° C, then cut into cubes

Mix with the quinoa and sprinkle with pine nuts

Calories ~400 kcal

Benefits: fiber, antioxidants, protein, vitamin K

Warm Asparagus and Prosciutto Salad

Ingredients (1 serving)

Asparagus 150 g

Prosciutto 30 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Lemon juice 1 tsp

Preparation

Sauté the asparagus for 5—7 min

Add the sliced prosciutto and heat lightly

Dress with lemon juice and olive oil

Calories ~250 kcal

Benefits: protein, antioxidants, fiber, vitamin C

Stuffed Tomatoes with Chickpeas and Basil

Ingredients (1 serving)

Tomatoes 2 pcs.

Cooked chickpeas 50 g

Fresh basil 5 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Remove the core from the tomatoes

Mix the chickpeas with chopped basil

Stuff the tomatoes and bake for 15 min at 180° C

Calories ~300 kcal

Benefits: protein, fiber, antioxidants, vitamin C

Green Pea, Mint and Feta Salad

Ingredients (1 serving)

Green peas 100 g

Feta 30 g

Fresh mint 5 g

Olive oil 1 tsp

Preparation

Boil the peas for 3—4 min

Mix with crumbled feta and chopped mint

Dress with olive oil

Calories ~250 kcal

Benefits: protein, fiber, vitamin C, antioxidants

Zucchini with Arugula and Walnut Pesto

Ingredients (1 serving)

Zucchini 150 g

Arugula 20 g

Walnuts 15 g

Olive oil 1 tbsp

Garlic 1 clove

Preparation

Cut the zucchini into spirals

Blend the arugula, walnuts, garlic and olive oil into a pesto

Mix the zucchini with the pesto and warm slightly

Calories ~280 kcal

I hope you enjoyed these Mediterranean Diet recipes!

These vibrant, fresh, and flavorful dishes are much more than just food — they are a small journey along the sun-drenched shores of Italy, Greece, and Spain. Every recipe is packed with vitamins, minerals, and healthy fats that support heart health, nourish the brain, strengthen the immune system, promote radiant skin, and help keep the body energized and strong.

The Mediterranean Diet celebrates the joy of simple, natural ingredients: crisp vegetables, ripe fruits, fragrant olive oil, fresh fish, and seafood. It encourages creativity in the kitchen, inspiring you to combine flavors, experiment with ingredients, and create your own culinary masterpieces while caring for your health.

Many of the classic dishes of this lifestyle have fascinating stories behind them. The Greek salad we know today, with its feta cheese and olives, evolved over centuries from the traditions of farmers who cultivated vegetables under the Mediterranean sun and dressed them with olive oil to preserve their freshness. Likewise, pasta with tuna and garlic originated as a practical way to make use of a fisherman's daily catch and seasonal tomatoes — a simple meal with remarkable nutritional value.

Each dish offers not only exceptional flavor but also meaningful health benefits. Olive oil helps lower levels of «bad» cholesterol and supports cardiovascular health. Fish and seafood provide omega-3 fatty acids that contribute to healthy brain function and vision. Vegetables and legumes supply fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants that help protect the body against inflammation and support a strong immune system.

The Mediterranean Diet is not a set of strict rules — it is a way of life. It is about savoring fresh ingredients, eating mindfully, finding joy in every meal, and sharing good food with the people you love. It invites you to be creative in the kitchen: swap seasonal vegetables, add your favorite herbs, experiment with spices, and transform every day's menu into a new celebration of flavor.

Science continues to confirm its benefits. Studies show that following the principles of the Mediterranean Diet can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and stroke, while also improving cognitive function, mood, and sleep quality. For anyone seeking the perfect balance between health and the pleasure of eating, it is truly a remarkable approach to nutrition.

So take out your favorite skillet, drizzle some extra-virgin olive oil, gather fresh vegetables, and let every meal become a small step toward better health, longevity, and the authentic taste of the Mediterranean.

And remember: food is joy, inspiration, and an act of self-care. The Mediterranean Diet is one of the most beautiful ways to bring all of these together on a single plate.

Chapter 3. The Gluten-Free Diet and Delicious Recipes

When we hear the words *gluten-free diet*, images of trendy influencers posing with bowls of quinoa, nuts, and vibrant vegetables often come to mind. Yet the story of this diet runs much deeper — and is far more serious — than social media trends suggest.

The gluten-free diet was born not in lifestyle magazines but in hospitals and medical laboratories, where doctors searched for ways to help people suffering from a serious condition known as celiac disease. For most people, gluten remains an invisible and harmless part of everyday meals. For those with celiac disease, however, it can become a hidden enemy, damaging the intestinal lining, interfering with the absorption of vitamins and minerals, and causing chronic fatigue, abdominal pain, and digestive distress.

Physicians around the world agree: «A gluten-free diet is not a fashionable whim — it is a therapeutic tool,» explains Maria Novak. She notes that many patients with gluten intolerance experience remarkable improvements within just a few weeks: bloating subsides, digestion normalizes, and overall well-being improves significantly. The diet eliminates wheat, rye, and barley entirely, meaning that familiar breads, pastries, and baked goods must give way to alternatives such as buckwheat, rice, corn, quinoa, legumes, fresh fruits and vegetables, fish, meat, and nuts.

At the same time, specialists offer an important warning. Eliminating gluten without medical necessity and without maintaining a balanced diet may lead to deficiencies in fiber, iron, and B vitamins. Interestingly, British physicians were already describing symptoms associated with wheat intolerance as early as the nineteenth century, long before the term *gluten* even existed. Today, modern testing methods can identify gluten sensitivity with up to 95 percent accuracy, making the gluten-free diet an important medical intervention when properly prescribed.

Among celebrities, the gluten-free lifestyle has achieved near-cult status. Kate Hudson has said that it helps her feel lighter and more energetic. Beyoncé reportedly incorporates gluten-free meals while preparing for performances, using the approach to maintain both physical fitness and mental clarity. Gwyneth Paltrow has long promoted gluten-free eating as part of her broader philosophy of wellness, emphasizing its role in helping her stay focused, energized, and healthy.

Doctors point out that the benefits can be dramatic for those who genuinely need the diet. Patients with gluten intolerance often report reduced inflammation, relief from chronic fatigue, improved mood, and sharper concentration. Some studies also suggest that careful adherence to a gluten-free diet may reduce the risk of certain intestinal complications and allergic reactions.

Experts recommend undergoing proper medical evaluation before eliminating gluten from the diet. Nutrient-rich foods such as quinoa, buckwheat, vegetables, nuts, and seeds can help ensure adequate intake of fiber, minerals, and vitamins while maintaining nutritional balance.

A gluten-free diet is more than a trend — it can be an act of self-care. For individuals with celiac disease or sensitive digestive systems, it can be life-changing. For others, it offers an opportunity to explore a cleaner and more mindful approach to eating.

In many ways, adopting a gluten-free diet feels like embarking on a journey into a new culinary world, where traditional bread and pasta give way to quinoa, buckwheat, and rice. The roots of this dietary approach stretch deep into medical history. As early as the nineteenth century, doctors observed patients suffering from persistent abdominal pain, bloating, and chronic exhaustion, and noticed that removing wheat bread often brought relief. Decades later, scientists identified the culprit: gluten, a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye that becomes a formidable adversary for people with celiac disease.

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