



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

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'Going Mediterranean' can be good for your health

*By Lt. Col. Karen E. Hawkins,
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FORT LEE, Va. – Once again evidence demonstrates that following the Mediterranean Diet can be good for your health. A recent study published online June 24 in the British Medical Journal is one of the first to look at links between foods and longer life. This study reviewed data from more than 23,000 men and women who took part in the Greek section of the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition research.

Those who participated in the study completed questionnaires about diet and lifestyle and were interviewed regularly for eight and half years afterward. Participants were asked whether they smoked, how active they were, and whether they had ever been diagnosed with diabetes or cancer. One of the most important findings was that there was a significant reduction in deaths among those who followed a Mediterranean Diet.

So for your good health, you can buy the following foods (except for the red wine) found in the diet at your commissary where your savings can amount to 30 percent or more:

- **Lots of fruits and vegetables.** Eat five or more servings a day to get the antioxidants and fiber. This summer try grilling some vegetables along with your meat and chicken.
- **Fish several times a week.** Include fish several times a week. Certain fish such as salmon, trout and albacore tuna are high in omega-3 fatty acids and protein, which are beneficial for heart health.
- **Olive oil.** Virgin or extra-virgin oils are the least processed oils and have more

antioxidants. Try using olive oil mixed with balsamic oil for salad dressing and in marinades.

- **Small portions of nuts.** Nuts are low in saturated fats and high in good fats. Add some to salads and snacks.
- **Drinking red wine in moderation.** Red wine has antioxidants and can help reduce the blood's ability to clot due to an aspirin-like effect. No more than one 5-ounce glass of wine daily for women (or men over age 65), and no more than two 5-ounce glasses of wine daily for men under age 65 are recommended.
- **Very little red meat is eaten.** Try to substitute fish or chicken for red meat when possible. Lean red meat is OK to eat.
- **Whole grain bread and pasta.** Choose whole grain breads and pastas for the health benefits.

For more information about making healthy choices, visit Ask the Dietitian on <http://www.commissaries.com> and post your questions on the DeCA Dietitian Forum. Be sure to look for other useful information in the Dietitian's Voice archive. Sign up with the DeCA Dietitian on www.twitter.com and get messages sent to your cell phone today. For delicious recipes, check out Kay's Kitchen. And to enjoy all your commissary has to offer, sign up for the *Commissary Connection*.

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About DeCA: *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth about \$3,400 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America's military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*