

Lesson 4:

Eat Smart, the Mediterranean Way

Participants will learn which foods to eat more of and which to limit to help lower blood pressure and how these recommendations fit with the Mediterranean eating pattern.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, participants should:

1. Understand the type of foods to add to help lower blood pressure
2. Understand the type of foods to limit to help lower blood pressure
3. Learn about the Mediterranean eating pattern and its health benefits

Suggested Activities

Introduction

- Explain that the Mediterranean eating pattern can help manage blood pressure and how all the tips discussed in this lesson are designed to help participants eat the Mediterranean way. Talk about the Mediterranean eating pattern's various health benefits. (See coach resource: Eating the Med Way.)

Learning Objective 1

- Explain the importance of eating a diet that is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, skinless poultry, fish, nuts and olive oil. (See coach resource: Enjoy More Fruits and Veggies; Med Instead of Meds Tips and Tools.)
- Explain the importance of eating foods rich in potassium, magnesium, and fiber as they help lower blood pressure. (Examples include nuts, seeds, legumes, lean meats, and fruits and vegetables.)

Learning Objective 2

- Explain the importance of limiting saturated fat, trans fats, sodium and sugar. Limiting red meat will help decrease saturated fat while limiting sweets and sugar-sweetened beverages will help decrease sugar. (See coach resource: Med Instead of Meds Tips and Tools, Re-Think Your Drink.)

Learning Objective 3

- Discuss the seven steps to eating the Mediterranean way and show the videos for some of these steps. (See coach resource: Seven Steps to Eating the Med Way.)
- Provide time for the class to discuss this information and share thoughts.

Homework

Choose one healthy eating strategy we discussed in class today that you want to make part of your routine.

Resources

Coach resources:

- Eating the Med Way
- Med Instead of Meds Tips and Tools
- Enjoy More Fruits and Veggies
- Re-Think Your Drink
- Seven Steps to Eating the Med Way: Web Resource for videos

Additional coach resources:

- Food and Nutrition Services
- My Eat Smart, Move More: Farmers' Markets page
- North Carolina Association of Feeding America Food Banks
- USDA National Farmers' Market Directory—Limit the search to NC and then check SNAP under Payment Accepted for a regularly updated listing

Participant resources:

- Healthy Eating Tips for Seniors—National Council of Aging
- Six Ways to Eat Well as You Get Older—National Council of Aging

Additional participant resources:

- Seven Steps to Eating the Med Way: Web Resource for videos
- Enjoy More Fruits and Veggies
- Re-Think Your Drink
- Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)

All resources can be found online at startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach.
Username: **coach**
Password: **knowitco@ch**

Participants can access these resources directly at startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit.