For thousands of years, residents of the Mediterranean coastal region have been viewed as some of the healthiest people in the world. By studying their eating habits, scientists continue to discover increased health benefits, including fewer cases of heart disease, diabetes, obesity and Alzheimer’s—and a longer life span that is virtually free of chronic disease!

In fact, according to the American Heart Association, this “Mediterranean Diet” is not really a diet at all. It’s a way of life. Mediterranean people tend to dine leisurely, taking pleasure in enjoying their meals with friends and family. They eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and healthy fats and usually include a glass of wine with their meals, but generally aren’t overweight because they engage in regular physical activity.

**Embrace the Mediterranean Lifestyle**

You don’t have to be a gourmet chef to eat healthy. There are simple ways to incorporate the principles of Mediterranean eating into our own meals everyday:

» **Eat fresh.** Eat primarily plant-based foods, such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes and nuts

» **Skip the butter.** Replace butter and spreads (which are high in saturated fats) with healthy fats, such as olive oil and canola oil

» **Spice it up.** Use herbs and spices instead of salt to flavor foods

» **Rein in the red meat.** Limit red meat to a few times a month; keep lean, small portions (size of a deck of cards)

» **Go fish.** Eat fish and poultry at least twice a week

» **Raise a glass to healthy eating.** Drink red wine in moderation (optional)

» **Move more.** Be physically active everyday

**GO MEDITERRANEAN!! Shopping List**

- Olive oil
- Tomatoes
- Asparagus
- Artichokes
- Eggplant
- Butternut squash
- Zucchini
- Olives
- Fresh-cut herbs (parsley/chives/basil)

- Beans—black, red or white
- Almonds/Walnuts/Pine Nuts/Pecans
- Whole wheat bread/pita
- Whole wheat pasta
- Brown rice
- Alaskan salmon
- Tuna steaks
- Chicken
- Red Wine (optional)