

Fat Is Good, Bagels Are Bad

Some (Mediterranean) principles to eat by



by Miles Hassell MD

Good Food, Great Medicine

This is adapted from *Good Food, Great Medicine*, a Mediterranean diet and lifestyle guide and a practical, easy-to-read resource for anyone wanting to eat well without sacrificing eating enjoyment. Readers are offered both the evidence and the tools to help prevent or reverse heart disease and type 2 diabetes, improve cholesterol levels, control high blood pressure, reduce risk of stroke, dementia, and cancer, and lose weight without deprivation. The pages referenced here are from the third edition; for more details, see last page of this handout.

Good food is our best medicine. However, if we have health problems, excess weight, or a family history of heart disease, diabetes, or cancer, there are a handful of “food rules” that can make a huge difference in our future health. How seriously we take these depends on our own risk factors as well as our decision as to what we want our life to look like in ten years. The following suggestions are in two groups: “What to eat” and “What to avoid.” **Note:** special occasions like birthday parties (as long as they are birthdays of people you know personally) and holidays are exceptions: in those cases it may be appropriate – arguably even therapeutic – to see how many of these rules we can break at one sitting.

What is the Mediterranean diet?

Although there is no precise definition of the Mediterranean diet, it is safe to say that there is a pattern common to most Mediterranean regions, and this pattern is consistent with what has been found in published medical studies.

- High intake of vegetables, fruits, beans (and other legumes), nuts, seeds, and grains (historically mainly unrefined)
- High intake of (extra-virgin) olive oil
- Moderately-high intake of fish
- Moderate intake of dairy (historically cultured, like yogurt, kefir, and cheese)
- Moderate meat, poultry, and eggs
- Moderate wine, generally with meals

WHAT TO EAT

Here is an overview of foods that should be in our shopping carts and on our plates.

1. **Eat vegetables** with every meal and snack, and **eat fruit** whole, not juiced.
2. **Eat beans and other legumes** daily or at least three times a week.
3. **Eat minimally-processed whole grains** and choose unprocessed grains where possible.
4. **Eat good fat**, not low fat, with each meal and snack. Use extra-virgin olive oil as your main cooking oil, replacing most other oils and fats. Use butter, not margarine. Eat raw nuts and seeds, avocados, and other healthy fats.
5. **Eat fish, unprocessed meat, and real eggs**, emphasizing oil-rich fish like salmon, tuna, and sardines 3–4 times a week, moderate amounts of poultry, pork, and eggs¹, and moderate-to-small amounts of red meat.²
6. **Eat dairy, preferably cultured**, like plain yogurt and kefir, and aged cheese.
7. Keep **alcohol** to one glass of wine (about 5 ounces) daily, with a meal.

Vegetables and whole fruit

Aim for 9 servings daily of vegetables and fruit, including them in every meal and snack. This means *whole* fruits and vegetables, not juice. Fiber is king, and with it come more vitamins, minerals, phenolics, and so on. (Fiber additives don’t replace naturally-occurring fiber, by the way.) Eat as wide a variety as you can – red, orange, yellow, gold, green, blue, purple, and white. Fresh and raw is good, but cooked is fine and even preferable in some cases. (A well-known example of this is the tomato, which needs to be cooked for the antioxidant called lycopene to be available to your body.) Frozen can be almost as good as fresh, but check the labels of canned and frozen vegetables and fruit carefully for sweetening and other additives.

¹ Rong, Y. et al. *BMJ* 2013;346:e8539

² Micha, R. et al. *Circulation* 2010; doi 10.1161

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Examples of servings can be a medium carrot or tomato, two six-inch stalks of celery, a half-cup of cooked broccoli, a half-cup scoop of coleslaw, a two-inch chunk of cucumber, a cup of chopped fruit or berries, and so on. Whole fruit like an apple, pear, orange, or banana can be one or two servings, depending on the size. For dense cooked vegetables like squash, a serving could be a half-cup, and something fluffy like leafy greens may be 1½ cups. For recipes featuring vegetables, see pages 159-196.

Beans and legumes

Lentils, split peas, chickpeas, and beans of all kinds (black, pinto, navy, white, red, soy, and so on) tend to be neglected, but they have a remarkable nutritional profile – protein, vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants. Include at least three serving each week. You don't even have to cook them yourself, thanks to the convenience of canned beans. Fresh frozen beans, like baby green limas and soybeans (edamame) add yet another dimension. For recipe ideas featuring beans see pages 197-206.

Whole grains

Grains that have been left as intact as possible will have maximum nutrients. An intact whole grain has three parts – bran, germ, and starchy endosperm – each with a specific function and benefit. The bran fiber slows the absorption of starch, and both bran and germ supply most of the fiber, vitamins, healthy oils, and about 25% of the protein. When the grain is refined, not only is this nutrient-rich outer part removed, but the now-unprotected oils in the bran and germ quickly begin to oxidize and are rancid within weeks of the milling process. The less processed (more coarsely ground) the grains we eat, the more slowly and steadily they will raise our blood sugar as they are digested. An example of a minimally processed grain would be steel-cut oats or bulgur. The longer it takes to chew, the better it is for us. (See pages 23–25 for details. For whole grain recipes and tips see pages 207–218 and 247–274.)

Most of us eat too many wheat products, so try to introduce non-wheat options like millet and quinoa, or brown rice. Unprocessed grains are good in moderation, but for those struggling with blood sugar or weight loss even whole grains are best avoided – bread made with even 100% whole grain flour still has rapidly-metabolized starches which affect blood sugar similarly to bread made with white flour. *Breadzilla* (pages 252–253) is a heavy European-style loaf that is metabolized so slowly that blood sugar is barely affected.

Good fat

We *need* good fat, not only for the health of body parts like skin, hair, and brains, but also to help food taste better. Diets rich in good fat are associated with less risk of diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. The best fats are those found in foods like extra-virgin olive oil, fish, raw nuts and seeds (like sunflower, sesame, and pumpkin), olives, and avocados. Omega-3 fatty acids (found in fish, nuts, and flax seeds) and extra-virgin olive oil (mostly monounsaturated fat) should be more abundant in the diet than saturated fats or refined vegetable oils.

Extra-virgin olive oil is a minimally-processed food which can be produced in one's own backyard today, as people have done for thousands of years – crush the olives, separate the oil from the solids, and it's ready to eat. Its minimal low-heat processing allows the oil to retain its rich and unique family of phenols and other antioxidants. The more refined olive oils (regular and light) are second-best but still preferable to other highly-refined vegetable oils.

The words “low-fat,” unless attached to a whole food that is *naturally* low-fat, should raise red flags. A low-fat label on prepared foods usually doesn't mean “low calorie” – it may instead mean “high-sugar.” (When fat is removed from food, it is often replaced with sugar to make up for the loss of flavor and “mouth-feel.”)

What about dietary cholesterol and saturated fat?^{3,4}

Even after decades of research, there is no consistent link between saturated fat, dietary cholesterol, and health outcomes. Mediterranean-style diets are *not* low in saturated fat or cholesterol, yet are associated with *less* heart disease, stroke, diabetes, obesity, dementia, and cancer. The unwarranted fear of saturated fat and dietary cholesterol distracts attention from the genuinely bad actors like sugar, refined grains, hydrogenated oils, and processed meats, which really do increase risk of heart disease, stroke, obesity, type 2 diabetes, cancer, and dementia. In addition, a whole-food diet with plenty of vegetables and other naturally high-fiber foods often reduces intake of saturated fat and dietary cholesterol, whether or not that was a goal. Aim to keep servings of animal protein to no more than one third of your plate.

³ Siri-Tarino P.W. et al. AJCN 2010;91:535-46

⁴ Hu, F. AJCN 2010;91:1541-2

Fish, unprocessed meat, and real eggs

Eat plenty of fish, fresh, canned, or frozen, especially fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids like salmon, tuna, and sardines. Unprocessed meat – like beef, lamb, pork, chicken, turkey, wild game, and organ meats like liver – is good food and a source of high quality protein, but think of it more as a condiment than the main feature; adding meat and cheese to dishes made mostly with vegetables, beans or whole grains can improve the flavor and texture immensely. Eggs are also rich in protein and healthy fat, and are valuable as the basis for simple and satisfying meatless main dishes with vegetables and cheese. Most evidence would agree with eating seven eggs weekly and limiting red meat to 24 ounces (uncooked weight) per week. Beans, whole grains, and raw nuts are good proteins, too.

Dairy foods

Dairy foods have been eaten by healthy human populations, mostly in cultured form, throughout history. For most of us, they are part of a healthy diet, but for any given food – dairy, oranges, peanuts, wheat, you name it –there are people who may be intolerant. For those intolerant of dairy, we suggest simply avoiding it rather than using processed substitutes. For the rest of us, dairy foods are important sources of protein, calcium, magnesium, probiotics, cancer-protective vitamin K, and a variety of other nutrients. The evidence suggests there is a benefit in choosing whole or 2% milk products rather than low-fat or non-fat. Two or three servings a day are a reasonable maximum, and evidence favors cultured dairy foods (such as plain unsweetened yogurt, kefir, and aged cheese like cheddar and Parmesan) rather than milk. Yogurt and kefir are sources of beneficial microorganisms (probiotics) that benefit the microflora of the gut, as well as calcium and protein, and are well tolerated by most of us, even many who are lactose-intolerant. Choose plain, unsweetened kefir and yogurt to avoid added sugar. Butter is a source of valuable fatty acids and nutrients, especially butter from grass-fed animals.

Dairy fat has a unique nutritional profile. We suggest using whole or 2% milk for better weight loss, insulin resistance,⁵ and cardiac health.⁶

Alcohol

Moderate alcohol (up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks for men) is associated with better overall health outcomes. With certain conditions like hypertension, diabetes, excess weight, abnormal cholesterol, and insomnia, limit to one drink daily. A drink is defined as 5 ounces of wine (a little over ½ cup), 12 ounces of beer, or 1½ ounces of spirits.

Red wine seems to have the best data, but it appears that all forms of alcohol have evidence for benefit in small amounts. We think that all alcohol is best when consumed with a meal. Avoid mixed drinks and cocktails.

WHAT TO AVOID

The six food categories in the following list are essentially nutritionally bankrupt, and all are associated with worse health outcomes.

1. **Sugar, real and artificial**, including brown and white sugar, “raw unrefined” sugar, agave nectar, rice syrup, fruit juice concentrate, stevia, aspartame, and so on.
2. **Sweet drinks**, whether naturally or artificially sweetened, including fruit juices, diet soda, vitamin water, sports drinks, and meal replacement drinks.
3. **Highly-refined grains, even if labeled “whole grain,”** including commercial breakfast cereals, instant oatmeal, grits, degerminated cornmeal, white rice, white flour, and most crackers, rice cakes, pretzels, breads, and pastas.
4. **Highly-processed fats and oils**, including most highly-refined vegetable oils, and hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated oils found in most margarine, vegetable shortening, and commercially-fried and packaged foods.
5. **Preserved or processed meats**, like deli meats, bacon, ham, cured sausages, salami, hot dogs, and most rotisserie chicken.
6. **Fake or highly-altered foods**, like egg and butter substitutes, non-dairy creamer, meat substitutes like textured vegetable protein (TVP), and artificial sweeteners, flavors, and colors.

⁵ Mozaffarian, D. et al. Ann Intern Med 2010;153:790-9

⁶ Warensjo, E. et al. AJCN 2010;92:194-202

Sugar, real and artificial

Refined sugar has no nutritional value apart from empty calories, and contributes to obesity as much or more than fat. Sugar may also suppress our body's immune response. Reducing sugar in our diet is a big step toward better health and weight. Sugar we add ourselves is not as much a problem as the sugar we eat in prepared and packaged foods because the quantity we add is usually less.

However, use as little of *any* sweetener as possible, and switch to traditional sweeteners like raw honey (a whole food rich in antioxidants), and pure maple syrup. Need to use sugar in a recipe? Use plain old brown or white sugar. When it is a small part of the diet, it's not a big deal – but remember that most recipes call for up to *twice* the sugar needed!

Read ingredient lists! This is where you find hidden sweetening. We can avoid a lot of excess sugar simply by avoiding packaged foods, which often contain three or four types of sugar. All packaged food is guilty until proven innocent! Note that sweeteners have many names: *evaporated dried cane juice, cane juice crystals, raw sugar, fructose, sucrose, dextrose, glucose, maltose, sorbitol, mannitol, erythritol, stevia, high fructose corn syrup, agave nectar, brown rice syrup, malt extract, molasses, fruit juice concentrate, honey, maple syrup* and so on. Don't be fooled by romantic descriptions like *organic, raw, natural, and unrefined* – these are meaningless to your overall health. Also, ingredients are listed in their order of prevalence, so manufacturers often add several kinds of sweetening to push them further down the list. **Agave nectar**, as commonly sold in the U.S., is just another highly-refined sugar, and is chemically similar to high-fructose corn syrup. In most cases it is produced from agave starch much like high-fructose corn syrup is manufactured from corn starch. Avoid both.

Avoid artificial sweeteners and sugar substitutes. This includes calorie-free sugar substitutes like aspartame, sucralose, and stevia. We suggest avoiding non-nutritive sweeteners – even so-called “natural” ones for three reasons:

1. Artificial sweeteners seem to mess with the normal reactions your body has to food, including alterations in stomach emptying time,⁷ and brain and hormonal responses.⁸
2. Artificial sweeteners may be as closely linked with obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and poor health as real sugar.^{9,10} In one study, for

example, those who drank the most artificially sweetened beverages doubled their risk of developing diabetes.¹¹ However, there is debate as to whether this risk is related to *other* choices made by people who use artificial sugar substitutes, rather than the substitute itself.

3. Sweeteners help maintain our sweet tooth, which makes it much harder to reduce the sweet things we eat. Train your palate by eating less sweets, and you'll find you crave them less. It won't happen overnight, so start now!

Stevia still has very little data to support its use. It starts out as a plant with intensely sweet leaves, but in its commercially-available form is so highly processed that it is anything but natural – plus it maintains your sweet tooth. We recommend against using stevia – unless, of course, you grow your own.

Sweet drinks and liquid calories

These include fruit drinks and juices, sodas, “vitamin waters,” sports drinks, energy drinks, smoothies, sweetened coffee and tea drinks, and so on. The increase in sweet drink consumption over the last few decades seems to be related to a sharp rise in obesity, especially in children.

Soft drinks (sodas) have been associated with a rise of type 2 diabetes in adults as well as an increase of the metabolic syndrome (a cluster of risk factors associated with more strokes, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, dementia, and some cancers).¹² Sodas, sugar-sweetened *or* calorie-free, are associated with more osteoporosis,¹³ obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. In one study, about one diet soda *per week* was associated with twice the risk of diabetes!¹⁴

Fruit juice – even unsweetened – is associated with increased type 2 diabetes.¹⁵ Just one daily serving of fruit juice may increase risk of diabetes by 18%,¹⁶ and obesity, particularly in children. (Whole fruit is *not* associated with this risk.) A glass of juice delivers the concentrated sugar from 4–6 pieces of fruit. This is no way to treat your blood sugar or waistline. Even freshly squeezed juices are nutrient-poor and sugar-rich; they should be considered junk food, especially for children.

¹⁰ Swithers, S. Trends Endocrinol Metab 2013;24:431-41

¹¹ Fagherazzi, G. et al. AJCN 2013; doi:10.3945 (EPIC)

¹² Malik, V.S. et al. Circulation 2010;121:1356-64

¹³ Tucker, K.L. et al. AJCN 2006;84:936-42

¹⁴ Fagherazzi, G. et al. AJCN 2013;doi:10.3945

¹⁵ Muraki, I. et al. BMJ 2013;347:f5001

¹⁶ Bazzano, L.A. et al. Diabetes Care 2008;31:1311-7

⁷ Wu, K. et al. Am J Med 2006;119:802-4

⁸ Swithers, S. Trends Endocrinol Metab 2013;24:431-41

⁹ Green, E. and Murphy, C. Physiol Behav 2012, 107:560-7

Beware smoothies! Not only are these calorie-dense, but liquid calories are simply not as satisfying as solid food so they are easier to consume to excess. Solid food that you have to chew makes you feel more satisfied than the same food in a liquid state.¹⁷ Most smoothies have too much fruit sugar and readily-digested carbohydrates and too little good fat to offset the rise of blood sugar. They also encourage our sweet tooth.

Refined grains

Highly-refined grains like white flour and white rice, are nutrient-poor, calorie-rich, and associated with more obesity, diabetes, cancer, dementia, and depression, as well as heart disease and stroke. Ouch!

White flour is the bad boy of refined grain, but two of the most popular foods in this country are made from mostly white flour: bagels (white bread with attitude) and pasta (white bread with sauce). Both lack fiber and nutrition, and should be avoided along with all foods made with white flour, like scones, bread, and crackers. Read ingredient lists regardless of whole grain promises on labels. Even if a product claims to be whole grain, it will often contain just a small amount of whole grains. Also, beware the terms *wheat flour* or *enriched or unbleached* – it's still white flour.

Avoid items labeled “whole grain” but which are highly processed and often sweetened, like ready-to-eat breakfast cereals, most granola bars, and most commercial granolas. Also included are grits, degerminated cornmeal, instant oatmeal, cream-of-wheat, rice cereal, and corn chips. Rice cakes and other puffed grain snacks and snack chips have especially high starch loads – watch out. Don't underestimate the damage to whole grain caused by processing. As a general rule, the coarser the whole grain food and the longer it takes to cook or chew, the better the nutritional profile, the slower it is metabolized, and the less impact it will have on your blood sugar.

White rice could be described as congealed glucose; most of the vitamins, minerals, amino acids, oils, fiber, and even a chunk of the protein have been removed, leaving behind starch and empty calories. Each daily serving is associated with an 11% increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes.¹⁸ Also avoid rice crackers, cakes, chips, krispies, and so on.

Avoid ready-to-eat breakfast cereals

These are among the sneakiest and most destructive of refined grains. Even when whole grain and without added sugar, they are processed to such a degree that the starch molecule and fiber have been altered, making them much more likely to raise blood sugars.¹⁹ (They also leave us feeling less “full” than whole grain equivalents like homemade muesli and granola.) The extensive processing of ready-to-eat cold cereals is precisely what gives them great mouth feel, crunchy texture, and long shelf life. However, once a grain has been roasted, crushed, made into a paste, extruded, steamed, puffed, blow-dried, finished with spray-on vitamins and minerals, and then left on a shelf for months, is it still a whole grain? The package says it is. The manufacturer says it is. Even the ingredient list might say it is. But is there any whole grain benefit left? We don't even *know* how to measure the damage the repeated heating and processing have done to the carbohydrate, the fatty acids, the nucleic acids, the vitamins, the minerals... and who knows what else.

Highly-processed fats and oils

These are highly-refined, nutrient-depleted fats.

- Hydrogenated/partially-hydrogenated oils found in most margarines and many packaged foods – baked goods, processed snacks, crackers, and cake mixes.
- Oils used in commercial high-temperature frying of foods like fries and doughnuts.
- Highly-processed vegetable oils, like safflower, corn, peanut, soy, and canola.

Hydrogenated oils are chemically altered and synthesized trans fats, and even in small amounts are bad for us. They raise LDL (bad) cholesterol, total cholesterol, triglycerides, and blood pressure, lower HDL (good) cholesterol, and seem to contribute to arterial disease, diabetes risk, asthma, and allergies. Ignore “*Zero Trans Fat!*” claims on labels – there may still be significant levels due to labeling law loopholes. Use butter instead of margarine, or combine 75% soft butter and 25% extra-virgin olive oil and stir together until smoothly blended; it will be spreadable even when cold.

Commercially fried foods like French fries, fried chicken, corn dogs, doughnuts, and so on, are lower in nutrients and higher in calories (because of processing), and are fried in chemically-stabilized

¹⁷ Martens, M. et al. Obesity 2011;19:522-7

¹⁸ Hu, E. et al. BMJ 2012;344:e1454

¹⁹ Granfeldt, Y. et al. J Nutr 2000;130:2207-14

fats. Also, avoid frozen foods like fish sticks, chicken nuggets, and spring rolls – they are hyper-processed and crammed with preservatives. (Read ingredient lists!) The best option is to prepare and fry your own food in your own kitchen.

Highly-processed vegetable oils: It takes extensive processing to produce mild-tasting, clear-looking, long-lasting, multi-purpose vegetable oils – which are also unlike anything available in the food supply prior to the last 100 years. Micronutrients in the crude oils are removed, damaged, or altered by high levels of heat during the processing, bleaching, and deodorizing. Even expeller or cold-pressed oils are highly refined to make them taste-neutral and give them a long shelf life. Also, most vegetable oils (two main exceptions being olive and coconut oil) are high in omega-6 fatty acids, which when oversupplied in highly-refined forms appear to be associated with worse health outcomes.²⁰

Preserved meats

Preserved (processed) meats – like bacon, ham, sausages, deli meats, bologna, and so forth – are much more identified with poor health than other animal products and usually contain preservatives, excessive salt, and often-excessive sugar. (Items like rotisserie chickens probably belong in this category – it’s a good idea to make sure you know what has been done to any commercially-cooked meat.) It is unclear what it is about preserved meat that causes it to be associated with diseases like cancer, heart disease, and diabetes: nitrates and nitrites have been on the short list of suspects, but we may never be sure. What *is* sure is that we are better off if we avoid them. However, many natural food stores carry fresh sausages without chemical additives. (As usual, check ingredient lists – they often have added sugar.) Also, traditionally-aged meats like prosciutto (Italian ham which has been salt-cured and air-dried) may be fine alternatives.

Fake foods

If a product has been made using ingredients that don’t appear in nature, avoid it. Some examples are margarine, fake whipped cream, non-dairy creamer and other milk substitutes, egg substitutes, meat substitutes like TVP (textured vegetable protein), commercial frozen yogurt, and artificial sweeteners found in diet foods. We are *much* better off eating the real foods they try to imitate. Ingredient lists help us sort out the real food from fake food.

Good food guidelines:

The guidelines in this handout are general principles that apply to most of us, but for more specific recommendations for type 2 diabetes reversal, weight loss, and cancer prevention and survivorship, check out additional handouts on our website, goodfoodgreatmedicine.com.

- **Eat real food.** Real food is usually food that our great-grandparents would recognize. If it can be raised on a farm or harvested from a forest, ocean, or river, it’s probably real food. Food commonly eaten for more than 150 years should be innocent until proven guilty, and food invented in the last 150 years should be guilty until proven innocent.
- **Eat a wide variety of whole foods**, as people have done throughout history: eating freely from whatever plant and animal food was available. This omnivorous way of eating is easier to follow than a restrictive diet, and has better evidence for improving health.
- **Choose minimally processed foods** – the less that has happened to food since it was a living plant or animal, the better.
- **Prepare your own food from scratch** where possible. This may seem persnickety, but it’s a game changer. Commercially-prepared food may have similar ingredients, but processing causes nutrient-density to be downgraded and calorie density to be upgraded.
- **Eat a Mediterranean-style diet**, which includes a broad spectrum of traditional foods (both plants and animals) and liberal amounts of naturally-occurring fats. The Mediterranean diet is associated with much less heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, dementia, and cancer.^{21,22}

Follow the evidence!

Question all diet and lifestyle dogma, including ours. Ask for evidence. Read ingredient lists. Eat more vegetables. Eat out less. Exercise daily. Remember, no improvement is too small.

²⁰ Ramsden, C.E. et al. BMJ 2013;346:e8707

²¹ Sofi, F. et al. AJCN 2010;92:1189-96

²² Salas-Salvado, J. Diabetes Care 2011;34:14-9

Miles Hassell MD is an internist in private practice at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center in Portland, Oregon, where he lives with his wife Anna and son Tor. He was born in Seattle, Washington, and was raised in Perth, Western Australia, receiving his medical degree from the University of Western Australia. He completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center.

Dr. Hassell is Medical Director of the [Integrative Medicine Program](#) at Providence Cancer Center in Portland and a clinical instructor in the training of Internal Medicine residents, twice named *Outstanding Teacher of the Year*. He also lectures widely to physician groups about the appropriate integration of lifestyle and conventional medicine, and is often interviewed on health issues by local television and radio. He is the co-author of *Good Food, Great Medicine*, an evidence-based guide to using a whole food Mediterranean diet in the pursuit of optimal health. In his private practice Dr. Hassell encourages the vigorous use of evidence-based food and lifestyle choices and has several times been chosen as one of *Portland's Top Doctors*. Dr. Hassell is available for individual consultations for diagnosis, second opinion, or to develop patient-centered solutions using evidence-based conventional and lifestyle interventions.

Miles Hassell MD

Internal Medicine
Comprehensive Risk Reduction Clinic
9155 SW Barnes Road, Suite 302
Portland, OR 97225

Voice: 503.291.1777

Fax: 503.291.1079

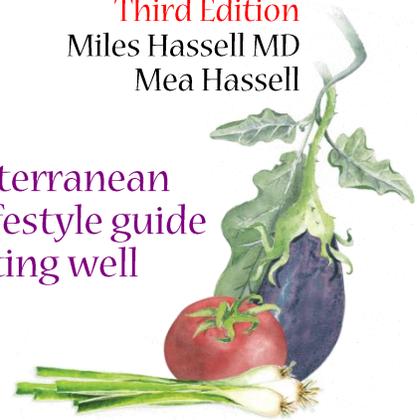
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Good Food Great Medicine

Third Edition
Miles Hassell MD
Mea Hassell

a Mediterranean
diet and lifestyle guide
to eating well



The 288 easy-to-read pages present powerful medical evidence to support adopting a whole food Mediterranean diet-and-exercise based lifestyle, with 185 simple-to-follow recipes using everyday ingredients. The 14-step *Risk Reduction Action Plan* helps:

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This is a practical resource for anyone looking for an evidence-based approach to eating well without sacrificing eating enjoyment.

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