

Dietary Pattern and Health Outcomes – Mediterranean Diet Approach in Kosovo

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Definitions of the Mediterranean diet (MD) are divergent in different sources, and some concepts are overlapping with other dietary patterns with known health benefit. The traditional MD mainly reflect plant-based dietary pattern considering high consumption of vegetables, fruits and nuts, legumes, and cereals (not processed), low consumption of meat and meat products, and dairy products. The Mediterranean diet has been linked to a number of health benefits, including reduced mortality risk and lower incidence of cardiovascular disease, and in the last years entered the medical literature rapidly. Higher adherence to the Mediterranean diet is linked to a lower risk of obesity, a variety of noncommunicable diseases (such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and metabolic syndrome), as well as mental problems, according to the published academic researches.

But, even within the Euro-Mediterranean region, attention to the Mediterranean diet varies from one nation to the next. Kosovo, as part of the Western Balkans (which include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia), is continental, landlocked country, where dietary habits (ex., adherence to MD) and connection with lifestyle and health status have not been studied yet, there are lack of data, or is generally considered only in multi-country surveys.

Does, the present study shows our intention to evaluate adherence to MD and its impact on lifestyle, physical activity and health outcome among inhabitants from different areas of Kosovo, with main goal to assess how sustainability of the MD is linked in different circumstances with

environment, economy, sociocultural, and nutrition-health issues. The preliminary data from the ongoing study, shows low to middle score of adherence to MD, and that more hard-working strategies are needed to make MD approach more familiar to the people while address health outcomes.

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