

YOUR COACH'S PLAN · FREE WITH THE ARTICLE

The 5-Swap Mediterranean Plan

For anyone who wants the heart and metabolic benefits of the Mediterranean pattern without falling into the packaged-food trap. Every line below restates a claim verified against Tier-1 medical sources. Nothing here is invented, and nothing is for sale.

✓ **CHECKED AGAINST** MAYO CLINIC, HARVARD HEALTH, CLEVELAND CLINIC

1-4
Tbsp olive oil a day
In place of butter and mayo, not on top of them.

2-3x
Fish per week
Salmon or sardines, canned counts.

≤1x
Red meat per week
Used as a condiment, not the center.

1

Olive Oil Instead of Butter
Swap the fat first

WHY IT WORKS
Use extra-virgin olive oil in place of butter, sour cream, and mayonnaise. Mayo Clinic suggests **one to four tablespoons a day**. The word that matters is instead, not in addition.

COACH'S NOTE
Start here because it is one decision you make once at the store, and it changes every meal after.

☐ Buy one bottle of extra-virgin olive oil

☐ Move butter and mayo to the back of the fridge

☐ Drizzle on vegetables and whole-grain pasta

MAYO CLINIC 2025 · CLEVELAND CLINIC 2025

2

Whole Grains In, Fish Twice a Week
Fix the base and the protein

WHY IT WORKS
Trade white bread, white rice, and pastries for whole grains like bulgur, barley, and farro. Add fish **two to three times a week** in place of a red-meat night. This removes the refined-carb trap Mayo warns about.

COACH'S NOTE
These two swaps do the heavy lifting. Whole grains close the door on the packaged shortcut; fish quietly replaces red meat.

☐ Switch to whole-grain bread and pasta

☐ Put two fish dinners on the calendar

☐ Keep canned salmon or sardines on hand

MAYO CLINIC 2025



Produce Every Meal, Red Meat Rarely

Crowd the plate, keep it for life

WHY IT WORKS

Put a vegetable or fruit on the plate at **every meal** (aim for four-plus vegetable servings a day), and move red meat to once a week or less as a condiment. Harvard and Mayo agree the benefit comes from keeping the pattern for good.

COACH'S NOTE

Make changes gradually. Overnight change is rarely realistic, so let one swap settle before adding the next.

- ☐ A vegetable or fruit at every meal
- ☐ Keep washed greens at eye level
- ☐ Red meat once a week, as a small part of the dish

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THE EVIDENCE, AT A GLANCE

WHAT THE SWAPS ADD

- ✓ Olive oil in place of butter and mayo
- ✓ Whole grains in place of refined
- ✓ Fish two to three times a week
- ✓ Vegetables and fruit at every meal

THE MISTAKE TO AVOID

- ✗ Low-fat processed and packaged foods high in refined carbs and sodium
- ✗ Olive oil and cheese added on top of an unchanged base
- ✗ Treating it as a two-week quick fix
- ✗ Red meat as the center of the plate

FULL SOURCES

Mayo Clinic, Mediterranean diet for heart health ([mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org), 2025). Harvard Health, A practical guide to the Mediterranean diet ([health.harvard.edu](https://www.health.harvard.edu), 2024). Cleveland Clinic, How to follow the Mediterranean diet ([health.clevelandclinic.org](https://www.health.clevelandclinic.org), 2025).

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You received this because you asked for the plan from "The Mediterranean Diet Mistake 80% of Americans Make." The Ageless Brief arrives weekly: one study, translated, no hype.

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