

## HEALTHY EATING AND ITS IMPACT ON HEALTH

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**Abstract.** This article discusses the impact of a healthy diet on the overall health of a person, based on data from numerous scientific studies. A healthy diet is defined as a balanced diet rich in macronutrients and micronutrients that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins. The article demonstrates that following the principles of a healthy diet can significantly reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, metabolic disorders and certain cancers, as well as having a positive impact on mental health. The statistical evidence presented, such as the results of the INTERHEART and EPIC studies, supports the importance of good nutrition in preventing disease and improving quality of life. In conclusion, the need for further research on the impact of nutrition on health is emphasized in order to formulate effective public health strategies and increase public awareness of the importance of a healthy diet.

**Key words:** Healthy eating, nutrients, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer prevention, mental health, Mediterranean diet, processed foods, scientific research, public health, nutritional guidelines, quality of life, nutritional epidemiology, dietary habits, nutrition and health.

Healthy nutrition is a fundamental factor that has a significant impact on overall health and quality of life. In today's society, where there is an increase in the number of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and cancer, recognizing the importance of good nutrition becomes especially important. Scientific research confirms that a diet rich in nutrients can significantly reduce the risk of developing these diseases and improve overall health.

In this article, we will review the main aspects of a healthy diet, its impact on various body systems and its role in disease prevention. We will analyze data from large studies, such as INTERHEART and EPIC, that provide strong evidence of the link between nutrition and health. Emphasis will be placed on World Health Organization recommendations and modern approaches to healthy diets, giving readers a better understanding of how to optimize their nutrition to maintain health and prevent disease.

A healthy diet includes a variety of foods that provide the body with essential macro- and micronutrients. According to the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), the diet should include:

- Fruits and vegetables: at least 400 grams per day.
- Cereal grain products: rich in fiber and vitamins.
- Protein sources: lean meat, fish, legumes and nuts.
- Limit sugar and saturated fats: no more than 10% of total calories.

**Research methods.** This article analyzes existing scientific publications and studies on the topic of healthy eating and its impact on health. Data from peer-reviewed journals, articles, and World Health Organization reports were used. Results from large cohort studies such as INTERHEART and EPIC are reviewed. These studies include data on the nutritional habits and health of participants, allowing correlations between diet and disease risk to be identified. Descriptive and analytical statistical methods have been used to process the data, including regression analysis, which helps to establish associations between various aspects of diet and health. A comparative analysis of different dietary approaches (e.g., Mediterranean diet, vegetarianism) has also been conducted to identify their impact on health and disease prevention.

**Results.** According to a study conducted by INTERHEART, eating right can reduce the risk of myocardial infarction by 30%. A study published in *Circulation* (2017) found that following a Mediterranean diet rich in olive oil, fish and vegetables was associated with a 25% reduction in the incidence of cardiovascular disease.

A 2018 study in *The Lancet* found that high consumption of processed foods was associated with an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Participants who followed a diet rich in whole foods had a 34% lower risk of developing this disease. Controlling carbohydrate and fat intake is also important to maintain normal blood sugar levels.

According to the World Health Organization, about 30% of cancers can be prevented with a healthy diet. Research conducted by EPIC (European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition) has shown that a high intake of fruits and vegetables reduces the risk of lung, breast and colorectal cancer. Specifically, it found that consuming 200 grams of vegetables daily can reduce risk by 15%.

There is growing evidence that nutrition affects not only physical health, but mental health as well. A study published in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* (2018) found that a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains reduced the risk of depression by 30%. At the same time, high intake of sugar and processed foods was associated with higher levels of anxiety and depression.

The following key findings on the health effects of a healthy diet emerged from the study: Participants who followed a healthy diet showed a significant 30-40% reduction in cardiovascular disease risk compared to those who consumed a lot of

processed and saturated fats. People following a Mediterranean diet showed improvements in metabolic syndrome indicators, including blood glucose levels and cholesterol values. Studies have shown that a healthy diet is associated with a lower likelihood of developing depression and anxiety disorders.

Participants with a high intake of fruits and vegetables reported better psycho-emotional well-being. Analysis of data from cohort studies indicates that adherence to healthy eating principles is associated with increased longevity and improved quality of life, as evidenced by reduced incidence of chronic disease. These results emphasize the importance of a healthy diet as a key element of disease prevention and improvement of general health, as well as the need to increase public awareness of the importance of good nutrition.

**Conclusion.** A healthy diet plays a critical role in maintaining health and preventing a host of chronic diseases. Research confirms that a nutrient-rich diet helps reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and even some cancers. In addition, proper nutrition has a positive impact on mental health and overall quality of life.

Given the increasing prevalence of unhealthy eating habits and related diseases, it is necessary to actively promote the ideas of healthy eating in society. Educational programs aimed at raising awareness of the principles of good nutrition can play a key role in changing the dietary habits of the population.

In the future, it is important to continue research in this area to better understand the mechanisms of nutrition's impact on health and to develop more effective strategies to improve people's quality of life. By adhering to the principles of healthy eating, each of us can contribute to our own health and the health of society as a whole.

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