

MODULE 3: QUALITY, VARIETY AND QUANTITY: THE THREE MUSKETEERS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET (Part 2)

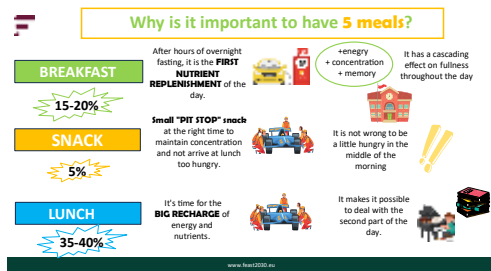


«Quality, variety and quantity: the three musketeers of the Mediterranean Diet» (Part 2)

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In alignment with the previous module, this module has the following objectives: to emphasize again the importance and functionality of the five meals; to share solutions to the most common mistakes present during the food day; and to provide useful strategies for creating healthier, more sustainable and more balanced meals.



Core concept: “The 5 meals provide us with energy throughout the day. They allow us to perform various activities in the best possible way.”

Using the metaphor of a car and fuel in relation to our body and food respectively, the 5 meals are helpful in promoting and facilitating the performance of activities throughout the day. Breakfast is an important first fueling, which not only has a positive effect on the immediate morning, but also has a cascading effect on the following meals and the daily mental and physical well-being. The morning snack is the crucial intermediate refueling that allows both the consumption of foods such as fruits or nuts and the avoidance of arriving too hungry for lunch, namely the "big energy refueling".

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(continuation of the previous one)

Similarly, the afternoon snack will allow us to vary food intake and avoid arriving at dinner with too much hunger. The dinner, if correct and balanced, will allow to provide the body with the adequate requirements for nightly recovery activities and optimal quality of sleep.

SOFIA's food day: where can she improve?

N°	MEAL
1 st	BREAKFAST 15% 1 glass of apple juice + 1 snack with cream
2 nd	SNACK 12 % 1 chocolate snack + 1 fruit
3 rd	SNACK 10 % 1 packet of chips
4 th	SNACK 5% 1 granola bar
5 th	LUNCH 20 % 1 slice of meat + salad and tomatoes
6 th	SNACK 5% 1 handful of nuts
7 th	DINNER 33 % Rice seasoned with tomatoes and zucchini + chicken breast

As in the previous module, the analysis of a food day is proposed so as to encourage the acquisition and consolidation of information. However, unlike the previous module, in this case the activity is not organized in small groups but is directed at the whole class.

SOFIA's food day : here is where she can improve!

N°	PASTO
1 st	BREAKFAST 15% 1 glass of apple juice + 1 snack with cream <i>Unbalanced on carbohydrates</i>
2 nd	SNACK 12 % 1 chocolate snack + 1 fruit <i>too much "junk food"</i>
3 rd	SNACK 10 % 1 packet of chips
4 th	SNACK 5% 1 granola bar
5 th	LUNCH 20 % 1 slice of meat + salad and tomatoes <i>Where are the carbohydrates ?</i>
6 th	SNACK 5% 1 handful of nuts
7 th	DINNER 33 % Rice seasoned with tomatoes and zucchini + chicken breast <i>I could also put 2 sources of carbohydrates: rice and bread together rebalancing the portion</i>

The slide shows in red where improvements can be made through food substitutions and integrations. It is suggested to stimulate discussion with students by asking them about possible alternatives.

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Core concept: “It is possible to create a balanced breakfast by proportionally including a source of protein, a source of complex carbohydrates, a source of simple carbohydrates, and a source of fats”

The "4-box method" is a simple and easy-to-implement tool for creating a balanced and satiating breakfast. Let's imagine that we have to fill 4 small boxes, each with a different food: the first one we fill with a source of protein, for example milk, yogurt or ricotta cheese; the second one with a source of complex carbohydrates, better if whole grain, such as bread, rusk or oatmeal; the third one with a source of simple carbohydrates, such as fresh fruit, jam or honey and finally the last box with a source of fats, such as some whole or 100% nut butter, dark chocolate, butter or oil seeds. Moreover, it is possible to choose more than one food from the same box but be careful to balance the portions and not leave the others empty. If we take a look at the typical breakfast with milk and biscuits, it is possible to see the imbalance for the carbohydrates and the fats: a breakfast that, for many people, causes an early onset of hunger.



This slide lists some examples of breakfasts created using the 4-box method. It is suggested discussing with the students the convenience and feasibility of these breakfasts in their daily life and work together to find workable strategies. However, in order to facilitate the development of new habits, a gradual approach to change is recommended: for example, associate the current habit with a new element according to the method, experiment with it for a few days, and later consider introducing new elements.

- Porridge: milk (P)+oatmeal (CC)+ fruit (CS)+ nuts (F)
- yogurt (P)+ breakfast cereals (CC)+ fruit (CS)+nuts and seeds (F)
- Natural salmon (P)+bread (CC)+fresh fruit smoothie or juice (CC)+avocado (F)
- Ricotta cheese (P)+bread (CC)+fresh fruit (CS)+nuts (F) +tea (hot drink with no added sugar)

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Core concept: "Balanced lunches and dinners can be created by including all 5 of the food groups in a proportionate way"

The "Healthy Plate" is a simple and easy-to-implement tool developed by Harvard Medical School for creating balanced and satisfying lunches and dinners. As illustrated, the plate contains all five food groups in different proportions. In particular, half of the plate should be made up of fresh, seasonal fruit and vegetables, and the other half should be made up of whole grains and animal or vegetable proteins. It is also important to include fats to complete the balance of the meal, such as extra virgin olive oil, nuts or oilseeds.



This slide lists some examples of lunch/dinner created using the method. It is suggested discussing with the students the convenience and feasibility of these meals in their daily life and work together to find workable strategies. However, in order to facilitate the development of new habits, a gradual approach to change is recommended: for example, associate the current habit with a new element according to the method, experiment with it for a few days, and later consider introducing new elements.

Meals can be either single course or multi-course. An example of a single-course meal might be: rice, diced fresh cheese, raw vegetables with oil for seasoning, and a fruit. The single course meal can be transformed into a vegetarian meal by choosing legumes, such as chickpeas, as the protein source. On the other hand, a two-course meal can have a first course of tomato pasta, a second course of salmon, a mixed salad and oil. Finally, a seasonal fruit to conclude the meal. Bread can be associated with all meals as an additional source of carbohydrates.

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EXAMPLE OF WEEKLY PROTEIN FREQUENCY:

MONDAY LUNCH	TUESDAY LUNCH	WEDNESDAY LUNCH	THURSDAY LUNCH	FRIDAY LUNCH	SATURDAY LUNCH	SUNDAY LUNCH
FISH	POUR CHICKEN	CHICKEN MEAT	EGG	FRESH CHICKEN	LEGUMES	RED MEAT
LEGUMES	CHICKEN	CHICKEN	CHICKEN	CHICKEN	CHICKEN	CHICKEN
LEGUMES	LEGUMES	FRESH CHICKEN	LEGUMES	FISH	EGG	FISH

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As an example, this slide shows a table of weekly protein frequency according to the recommendations of the CREA "Healthy Eating Guidelines" for the age groups 11-14/15-17. It is recommended to emphasize the frequency of consumption of legumes (at least 3 times a week), the sporadic frequency of consumption of red meat (maximum 1 time a week) and the absence of cold cuts.



To facilitate the acquisition and consolidation of information, a short activity has been included to be carried out in small groups where each group is assigned a meal (Appendix 4). The purpose of the activity is to create a balanced food day by promoting cooperation and communication among the students.

CREATE YOUR FOOD DAY!

Breakfast: _____

Lunch: _____

Snack: _____

Dinner: _____

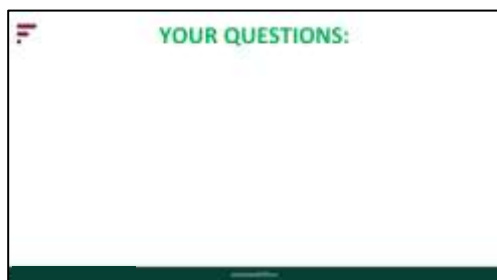
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This slide will be projected to the class and completed with suggestions from each group. Once completed, it will be useful to analyze the choices and share areas for improvement.

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To facilitate awareness of the relationship between the recommendations and one's own habits, the whole class is asked what might be important questions to ask themselves about whether their food day has been fulfilled.



This slide is projected to the class and will be completed with the questions raised. While finishing the slide, encourage discussion about the questions that came up.

