

Dr. Don Colbert Believes Going Keto-Mediterranean is the Lifestyle to Live

From chapters 15 & 16 (“A Lifestyle Worth Living” & “Sixteen Reasons to Live the Mediterranean-Keto Lifestyle”) from Dr. Don Colbert’s new book, *Beyond Keto*

My journey into the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle began with a trip that my wife, Mary, and I took to Greece. A friend of ours grew up in Crete and she kept telling us about the olive groves, some with trees two thousand years old, and how amazing it was there.

We went during the olive harvest season and our friend took us to see many things, including her friend’s olive press factory where local farmers would bring their olives to be pressed. There were giant drums that held cold-pressed extra-virgin olive oil that was then bottled and sold locally or exported.

Within an hour of olives going into the press, they would have bottles of fresh olive oil. We were impressed with the process, but there was more to it.

The owner took us into a back room, where he put a couple of shot glasses on a table. Into each he poured about one ounce of the cold-pressed extra virgin olive oil that had just been pressed.

He told us, “Try it. It’s fresh and it’s high in polyphenols, but I’m going to warn you. There will be a tingle in the back of your throat, a mild burning and a slight cough, but they will go away. With high quality olive oil, you get these symptoms, which are a sign of high-quality olive oil rich in polyphenols.”

The tingle is an anti-inflammatory effect. If you have swallowed liquid ibuprofen, you will have experienced a very similar feeling. With olive oil, that tingle, burning, and cough is how you know it's high quality.

Mary and I took our little shot glasses of olive oil and tossed them back, swallowing the olive oil in one big gulp. Sure enough, it did burn the back of our throats. We coughed. But in a flash it was gone. Wow! Never had olive oil caused me such a reaction.

That was my hands-on demonstration of how they screen for high-quality olive oil. Lab tests can also be run on olive oil, checking for polyphenols and oleocanthal. If it doesn't make you cough, if it doesn't burn, then it usually doesn't have the higher concentrations of these powerful polyphenols. It's not bad, of course; it's just that some olive oil is much healthier than already-healthy olive oil.

One Secret Ingredient In Olive Oil: Oleocanthal

Many olive oils have these phenolic compounds but not to the same degree of potency.¹

Oleocanthal, for example, is found in the highest concentrations in extra-virgin olive oil from certain locations in the world. Greece just so happens to be home to several of those locations.

Interestingly, the only known source for this special oleocanthal polyphenol is extra-virgin olive oil. It is found nowhere else. This oleocanthal is actually stronger than ibuprofen as a pain reliever and has been found to help clear beta-amyloid from the brain and even kill cancer cells.²

Oleocanthal has been and is being used to fight neurodegenerative diseases, cardiovascular diseases, Alzheimer's disease, cancer (prostate, melanoma, breast, etc.), arthritis, inflammation, and more.³

You would think, if extra virgin olive oil is so good for you and certain areas in Greece boast some of the highest oleocanthal concentrations in the world, that these people would have less sickness and disease and live longer than the rest of us. Well, that is indeed the case.

Back in the 1950s, a physiologist named Ancel Keys from the University of Minnesota did the famous “Seven Countries Study” of diets and habits of people from seven countries (Greece, Italy, Netherlands, former Yugoslavia, Japan, Finland, and the United States). The results: people from Greece lived the longest and had one of the lowest rates of heart disease and consumed the most fat in the form of olive oil.⁴

About ten years ago the small Greek island of Ikaria was reported to have more healthy people over age ninety than anywhere else in the world.⁵ It has one of the largest populations of centenarians (people who live to one hundred or more) in the world. Most of this (health, longevity, vitality) I believe is due in part to the incredibly healthy olive oil that is consumed daily.

The full value of oleocanthal to our health and longevity is still being researched, studied, and calculated, but the fact that it’s right there in front of us as part of a natural, healthy diet and lifestyle is pretty amazing. It’s only one of the great many reasons for choosing to live a Mediterranean-keto lifestyle. Now, we can’t all move to Greece or some other Mediterranean country, but thankfully we can all live a healthy Mediterranean-keto lifestyle no matter what city, state, or country we happen to be in.

Sixteen Reasons to Live the Mediterranean-Keto Lifestyle

As a medical doctor, I have always found it is satisfying to write a prescription for patients that really works and has no negative side effects! The Mediterranean-keto lifestyle is just that. What’s more, anyone can use it.

Here are sixteen very good reasons for living the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle.

The many health benefits from a healthy keto diet are yours in the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle, but it is important to understand that these benefits are long-term. They are part of the foundation of your healthy lifestyle that you get to live and enjoy for the rest of your life.

If you need to deal immediately with such things as prediabetes, type 2 diabetes, obesity, mild to moderate memory loss, cancers, and other sicknesses and diseases, I usually recommend starting with a healthy keto diet and then shifting over to this Mediterranean-keto lifestyle when the time is right.

Whatever your reason for living the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle, here are sixteen of them, and keep in mind, you get them all:

1. Burns fat instead of sugar—Changing your diet to macronutrient levels will cause your body to be in and out of ketosis. That means your body will usually burn fat rather than sugar for fuel. Weight loss is the direct result.

2. Snuffs out inflammation—Inflammation is a root cause of virtually every chronic disease (cardiovascular disease, arthritis, most cancers, autoimmune diseases, IBS, psoriasis, most lung disease, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, gum disease, depression, autoimmune diseases, etc.), and the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle helps snuff out inflammation by lowering blood sugar and insulin levels as the foods consumed also decrease inflammation, especially olive oil, fish, veggies, fruits, beans, and red wine.

3. Provides better blood sugar control—The Mediterranean-keto lifestyle lowers blood sugar levels and insulin levels, which help prevent and/or treat type 2 diabetes, prediabetes, and insulin resistance.

4. Helps control appetite hormones—Lower insulin levels from the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle gives you better control of leptin (the appetite hormone).

5. Improves/cures acid reflux—The most common cure of acid reflux is simply losing belly fat and then keeping the weight off, and you get both with the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle.

6. Reduces plaque in arteries—The Mediterranean-keto lifestyle usually lowers blood-sugar levels, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels, and that prevents plaque growth, which is known to lead to heart attacks, strokes, and sudden cardiac deaths. Plaque is usually formed from elevated oxidized LDL cholesterol, elevated blood sugar, and excessive inflammation as well as other factors. The polyphenols, antioxidants, phytonutrients, omega-3 fats, and the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle help quench inflammation in the arteries.

7. Decreases Alzheimer's risk—The Mediterranean-keto lifestyle enables your body to properly regulate insulin levels, and that helps lower the inflammatory proteins, including beta-amyloid, that are directly associated with Alzheimer's disease. The powerful polyphenols, especially oleocanthal, and omega-3 fats are neuroprotective.

8. Lowers triglycerides & usually lowers cholesterol levels—The Mediterranean-keto lifestyle, with its lowered insulin levels and abundance of cholesterol-lowering monosaturated fats, usually lowers your triglyceride and bad LDL cholesterol levels and usually raises your good HDL cholesterol levels.

9. Prevents and fights cancer—Because cancer cells thrive on sugar, the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle doesn't feed the cancer cells their favorite food. Also, polyphenols, especially oleocanthal, and omega-3 fats support a healthy immune system. I recommend a strict healthy keto diet to fight cancer, but I recommend the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle as

the long-term protection against cancer.

10. Helps prevent heart disease—Heart disease is the biggest killer in the world, and the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle helps prevent that by lowering your insulin resistance, reducing your risk of prediabetes and type 2 diabetes, and decreasing inflammation, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.

11. Decreases arthritis pain—The Mediterranean-keto lifestyle is anti-inflammatory, and that usually relieves pain for arthritis sufferers.

12. Lowers blood pressure—The Mediterranean-keto lifestyle usually helps lower blood pressure by lowering insulin levels, which lowers your retention of sodium, and promotes healthy circulation because of the abundance of polyphenols. It also helps one lose belly fat, which also helps to lower blood pressure.

13. Helps a fatty liver—Fatty liver disease (not alcohol related), can be reversed and protected against with the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle because the healthy fats (e.g., olive oil, which is high in polyphenols) and lowered sugars, carbs, and starches usually improve or reverse a fatty liver when followed for a few months.

14. Improves/cures PCOS—The Mediterranean-keto lifestyle is ideal for women who suffer from polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS).

15. Slows down the aging process—The Mediterranean-keto lifestyle lowers sugar levels and helps reduce inflammation in your body, and the foods consumed are usually much higher in antioxidants, phytonutrients, and polyphenols, which in turn slows down the aging process.

16. Prevents most chronic diseases—Insulin resistance and chronic inflammation are the cause of almost all chronic

diseases, and the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle, with its low carbohydrate, high-healthy-fat diet is the best long-term lifestyle answer for insulin resistance and chronic inflammation.

A healthy keto diet is the backbone of the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle, so it only makes sense that you get the same amazing health benefits from a lifestyle as you do from a diet. So whether you begin with a healthy keto diet to meet your specific health goals or you jump directly into the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle as a long-term option, your body benefits.

Imagine being able to stay, day in and day out, in that sweet spot of healthy living where your entire body is happy and healthy! That is what I like about the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle, and that is why I highly recommend it. That's also why I'm living this way myself.

For more information about Beyond Keto, check out .

Footnotes:

1. Goren et al. “(-)-Oleocanthal and (-)-Oleocanthal-Rich Olive Oils Induce Lysosomal Membrane Permeabilization in Cancer Cells.”
2. Goren et al. “(-)-Oleocanthal and (-)-Oleocanthal-Rich Olive Oils Induce Lysosomal Membrane Permeabilization in Cancer Cells”; Yazan and Amal Kaddoumi, “Oleocanthal-Rich Extra-Virgin Olive Oil Enhances Donepezil Effect by Reducing Amyloid- β Load and Related Toxicity in a Mouse Model of Alzheimer's Disease,” *Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry* 55 (May 2018): 113-123,
3. Antonio Segura-Carretero and Jose Antonio Curiel, “Current Disease-Targets for Oleocanthal as Promising Natural Therapeutic Agent,” *International Journal of Molecular Sciences* 19, no. 10 (October 2018): 2899,

%2Fijms19102899/.

4. "Country Trends," Seven Countries Study, accessed September 14, 2021,
5. Dan Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die," New York Times, October 28, 2012, {eoa}

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