

PERCEIVED BARRIERS AND DRIVERS TO MEDITERRANEAN DIET ADHERENCE OF PEOPLE LIVING IN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES

The factors that people living in Mediterranean countries identify to prevent them to adhere to Mediterranean diet (barriers) and that encourage them to follow this diet in their lives (drivers) were investigated by using questionnaires applied to more than 1000 participants from Italy, Spain, Turkey, Lebanon and Egypt. 11 barriers and 16 drivers were rated on a 5-point likert scale from 1 (not at all true for me) to 5 (very true for me).

Looking at the general survey responses of the participants from across countries, the main drivers to Mediterranean diet adherence identified in this population were: the Mediterranean diet includes healthier and more nutritious foods, contains healthier fats, encourages higher fruit-vegetable and lower red meat consumption, less processed foods, and high consumption of homemade foods. These factors bring people closer to the Mediterranean diet.

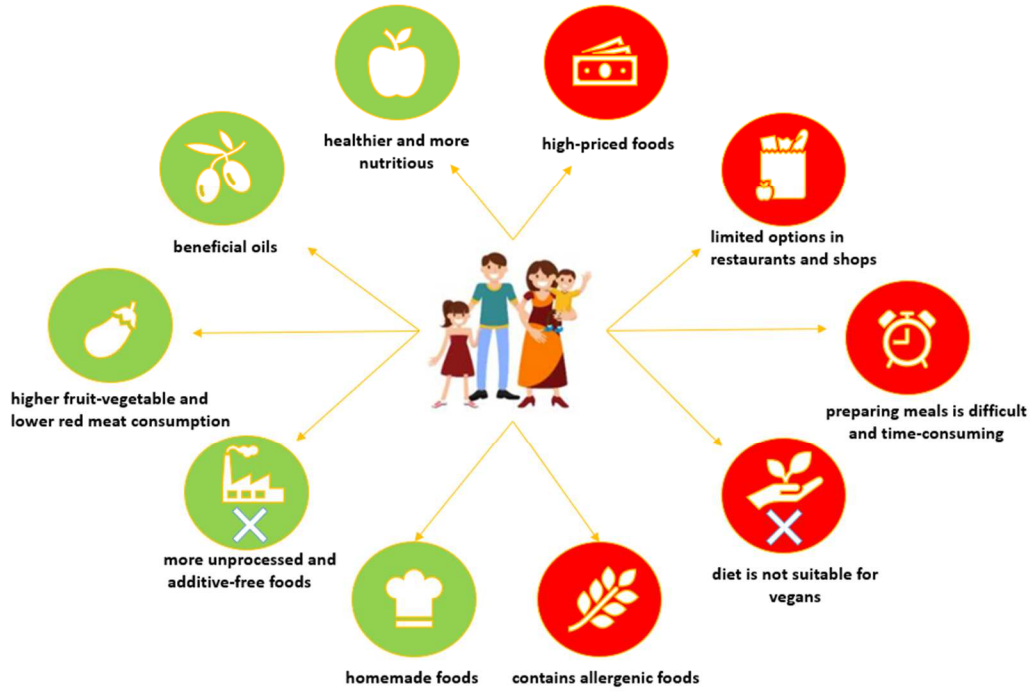
As barriers to the adherence to the Mediterranean diet, the most frequently reported were: the Mediterranean diet includes high-priced foods, there are limited options in restaurants and markets, it is difficult an time consuming to prepare meals suitable for the Mediterranean diet, Mediterranean diet is not suitable for vegans and diet contains allergenic foods. However, a very few percentage of this population rated this barriers with a high score. In fact, the main drivers described here obtained a score around 4 points while the main barriers scored around 2 points, on a 5-point scale.

In general, the main factor that encourages people to follow the Mediterranean diet is that the diet consists of healthy and nutritious foods. However, the high prices of the products in the Mediterranean diet and the fact that they think that there are limited options specific to this diet in the markets or restaurants drive people away from the Mediterranean diet. However, drivers seems to have a higher weight than barriers towards adherence to Mediterranean diet in this population, at least for the ones assessed in this survey.

Although people know the characteristics of the Mediterranean diet, it is thought that the most important obstacle to the adherence of this diet is the economic dimension of the diet.

MEDITERRANEAN DIET

DRIVERS



BARRIERS