



Health effects of olive oil and the mediterranean diet

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

EFFECT SIZE



There was insufficient evidence to support the use of the Mediterranean Diet for the prevention of rheumatoid arthritis, but it may provide some benefit for the progression of rheumatoid arthritis.

Forsyth, C., et al., The effects of the Mediterranean diet on rheumatoid arthritis prevention and treatment: a systematic review of human prospective studies. Rheumatol Int, 2018. 38(5): p. 737-747.

What is the effect?

No significant association with risk

Significant improvement in clinical parameters

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WHAT IS THE QUALITY OF THE EVIDENCE?

The risk of developing or progression of **rheumatoid arthritis**



Prospective study / clinical trials

2 clinical trials

2 prospective studies



A systematic review

KEY RESULTS



RISK OF DEVELOPING RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS:

No significant association with the Mediterranean diet (2 of 2 studies found no association).

PROGRESSION OF RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS:

Significant improvements in clinical parameters including pain, physical functioning, swelling, inflammatory markers and/or morning stiffness was reported from a Mediterranean diet intervention in 2 of 2 clinical trials over 3 to 6 months.

WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND?

Limitations

- Only a small number of studies met the inclusion criteria (4 studies out of 12 full-text articles assessed).
- Both the prospective studies were conducted among Americans, whose general dietary habits differ substantially from a traditional Mediterranean diet, and individuals with the highest adherence score may still not resemble the traditional Mediterranean diet.
- All studies had a moderate to high risk of bias.

WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?

There is a promise for the Mediterranean diet in reducing the progression of rheumatoid arthritis, but no evidence for a role in reducing its risk.

The evidence for both outcomes is limited and more studies are required. Well-designed prospective studies are needed to determine the protective role of a Mediterranean diet in preventing rheumatoid arthritis.

OTHER REVIEWS

Smedslund, G., et al., Effectiveness and safety of dietary interventions for rheumatoid arthritis: a systematic review of randomized controlled trials. J Am Diet Assoc, 2010. 110(5): p. 727-35.

