

# Fad Diets or Bad Diets?

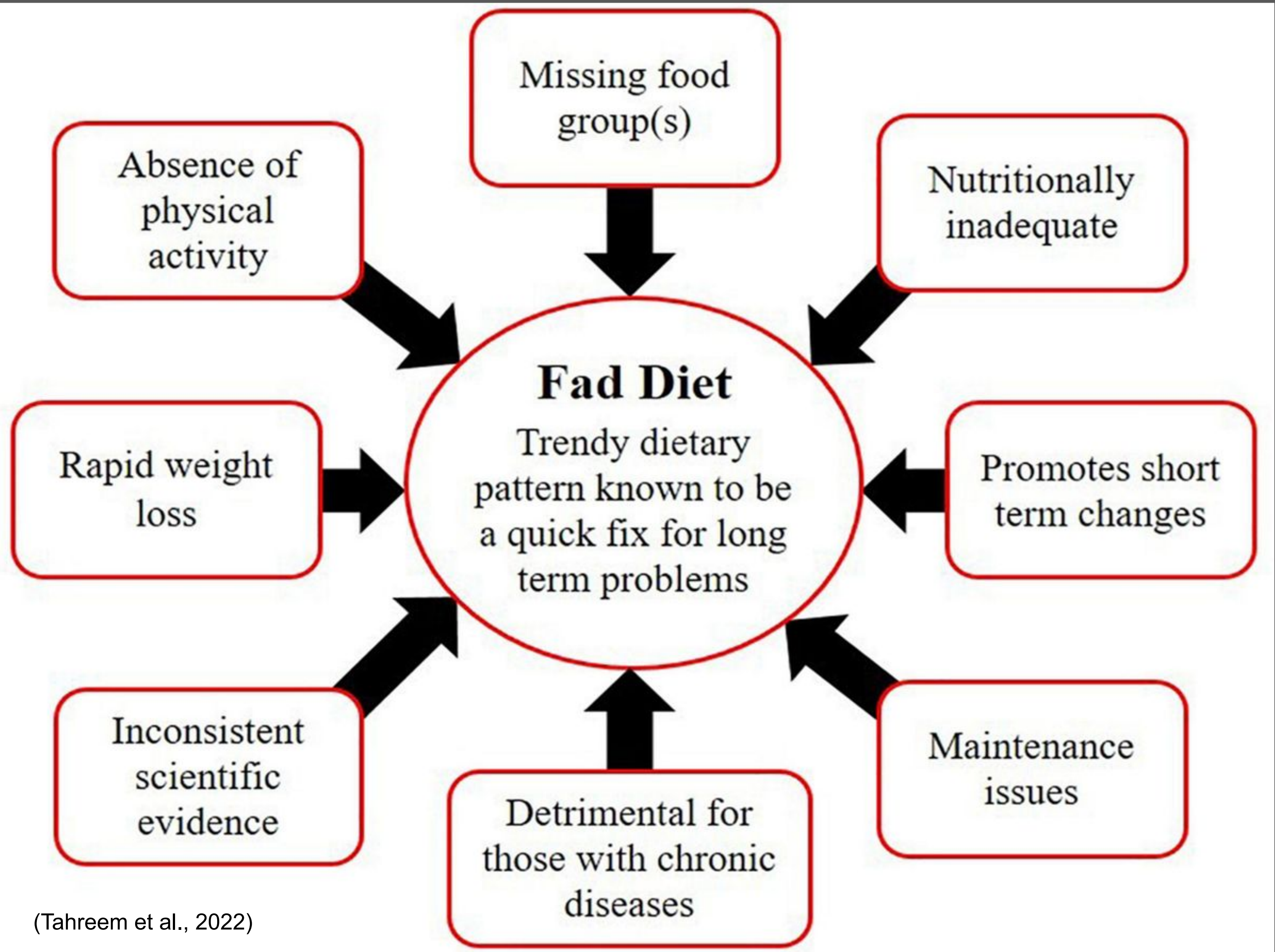
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## Introduction:

Most fad diets promote quick weight loss, usually by the restriction or exclusion of a major macronutrient or food group. Some examples include: <sup>(8)</sup>

- Atkins diet
- Ketogenic diet
- Paleolithic diet
- Mediterranean diet
- Detox diets

This begs the question, are these types of diets effective AND healthy for long term use?



## Methods:

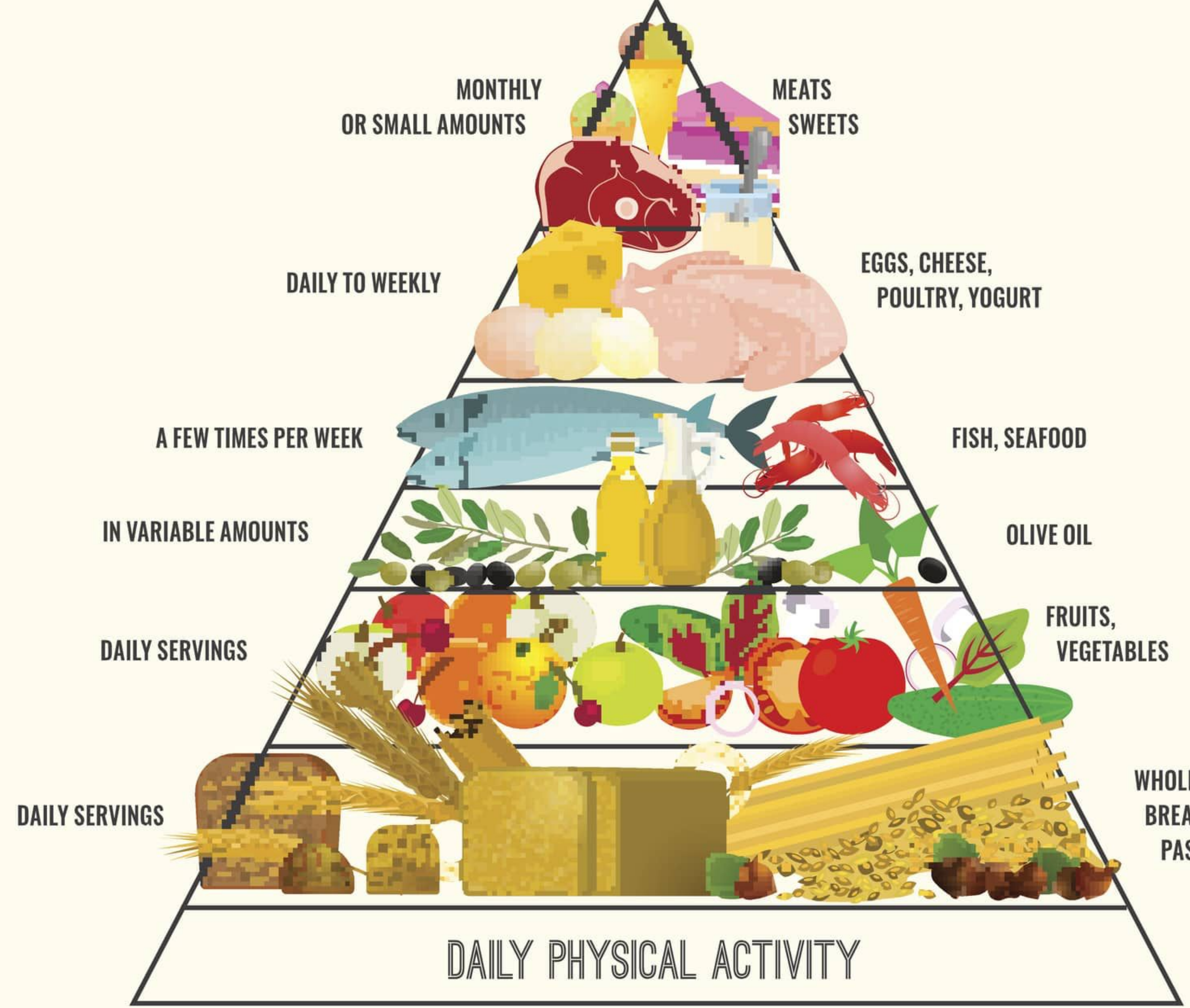
The search engine used was Google Scholar. Search terms included:

- Fad diets
- Fad diets + weight loss
- Fad diets vs nutritional science
- Mediterranean diet effectiveness and sustainability

## Fad diet rundown: <sup>(1,3,5,7,8)</sup>

- Atkins diet:
  - Very low carb consumption
  - Substantial short term weight loss
  - High dropout rate
  - Possible adverse health outcomes
- Ketogenic diet:
  - Low carb high fat consumption
  - Effective for neurological conditions
  - Possible issues regarding energy and fatigue
- Detox diets:
  - Very low calorie and usually liquid based
  - Can be effective in weight loss
  - Not backed by evidence
  - Serious health problems can occur
- Mediterranean diet:
  - Low carbs and processed food, rich in whole grains, fruit, dairy, and non-red meat
  - Supported by evidence
  - Sustainable for long term weight loss/health

| (Kuchkuntla et al., 2018)             | Low fat restricted calorie diet | Mediterranean restricted calorie diet | Low carb non-restricted calorie diet | P values                     |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| % Adherence to diet                   | 90.4%                           | 85.3%                                 | 78.0%                                | P = 0.004 among groups       |
| Loss of weight (kg)                   | 3.3 + 4.1                       | 4.6 + 6.0                             | 5.5 + 7.0                            | P = 0.03 low fat vs low carb |
| Reduction in BMI (kg/m <sup>2</sup> ) | 1.0 + 1.4                       | 1.5 + 2.2                             | 1.5 + 2.1                            | P = 0.05 among groups        |
| Reduced waist circumference (cm)      | 2.8 + 4.3                       | 3.5 + 5.1                             | 3.8 + 5.2                            | P = 0.33 among groups        |



(Ball, 2019)

## MEDITERRANEAN DIET

## Conclusion:

- Mediterranean diet is the most effective/sustainable fad diet
- Implement one in a way you can commit to
- Set goals
- Include physical activity and psychological support

## Other factors that make a good diet: <sup>(4)</sup>

- Achievable goals
- Consistency in food intake
- Quality over quantity
- Regular physical activity
- Easy to implement and adhere to for YOU

