

Unit 7 Diet and health

Task 1 “How healthy is your diet” questionnaire

In pairs ask each other the following questions. What other questions would you include if the aim of the questionnaire is to assess the nutritional value of someone’s diet?

1. Do you base your main meals around starchy foods, such as potatoes, rice, pasta or bread?
2. Do you regularly include pulses in your diet?
3. Do you regularly choose wholemeal bread or rolls rather than white?
4. Do you regularly eat pre-prepared meals, such as sandwiches or canned soups?
5. Do you skip meals on most days?
6. Do you regularly add salt to meals at the table?

Task 2 Sports nutrition

Complete the text with suitable words, the first letter is given.

P____ performance requires commitment to training and a number of other aspects. Our d____ - what we eat and drink - is one of the areas which can influence sports performance. Sports nutrition is the what, when and how much of food and f_____ we should consume.

Macronutrients and micronutrients

1. The keys to good nutrition are *b _____, variety and moderation*. To stay healthy, your body needs the right balance of **carbohydrates, fats, and p _____** - the three main components of nutrition, or m_____ nutrients.
2. You also need micronutrients, that is **vitamins, minerals** and other s_____ from many different foods, and while some foods are better than others, no single food or food group has it all - so eating a variety of different foods is e _____.

Moderation means eating neither too much nor too little of any food or n_____. Too much food can result in e_____ weight and even too much of certain nutrients, while eating too little can lead to numerous nutrient deficiencies and low body m_____.

Task 3 What dietary recommendations would you give to a person who

- wants to lose weight
- wants to build muscles
- suffers from anaemia
- is exhausted
- is pregnant

Task 4 Reading

Before you read

1. Which cultures enjoy the healthiest food, in your opinion? Explain.
2. Surprisingly, the richest countries may not have the best diets. What do you think?

Read the text and answer the questions below.

1 In recent years a large number of medical specialists and dieticians have *devoted* much effort to convincing us that just about everything we eat is bad for us. But now, if one accepts the findings of two recent international conferences held in San Francisco, there is some good news. Excellent health, increased longevity, and many simple pleasures of life are all available if you are prepared to follow “the Mediterranean Diet“, which is not so much a diet as a way of living.

2 Interest in the Mediterranean diet was first raised in the 1950’s, when researchers from Harvard University’s School of Nutrition became curious about why men and women on the islands of Crete and Sicily, many of whom lived well into their 80s, had one of the lowest *rates* of heart disease and cancer in the world.

3 They also noted a remarkably low rate of heart disease in other nations around the Mediterranean. *Incidences* of other diseases, such as breast and colon cancer, were also lower in the Mediterranean region, and in Greece and southern Italy *life expectancy* was about four years longer than in the U.S. or Northern Europe.

5 During more than 15 years of research, epidemiologists, who study large populations to identify “risk factors“ for diseases, were unable to identify the *crucial* factors, which affected the health of these Mediterranean populations. Finally, in 1964, the researchers began to focus on what they identified as the “traditional Mediterranean diet“.

6 They noted that the core of traditional Mediterranean cuisine of the 50’s and 60’s was an abundance of fruits and vegetables as well as large quantities of bread, pasta, legumes, nuts, couscous, rice and other grains. The overall diet included very little meat and only moderate amount of fish, poultry and dairy products. Sweets played a small role in the dining habits of the people and fruits were the main form of dessert. The two most striking features of the Mediterranean diet were that olive oil *accounted for* as much as 40% of all of the fat consumed by most Mediterranean people and that they consumed wine with nearly every meal.

7 This and subsequent research resulted in the creation of the Optimal Traditional Mediterranean Diet Pyramid. The pyramid consists of nine levels, each representing the stress to be placed on various elements of the diet.

8 Red meat, at the pyramid’s pinnacle, is recommended only a few times per month. Sweets, poultry, eggs and fish are recommended a few times a week, and olives, olive oil, dairy products, beans, legumes, nuts, fruits and vegetables and whole grains including pasta and rice are recommended on a daily basis. The major focus at recent conferences has been on olive oil and wine.

9 According to prof. Walter Willet, olives and olive oil lowers levels of LDL, which is considered the *harmful* or “bad“ cholesterol. Olive oil also contains high quantities of antioxidants, today’s nutritional miracle, and these are also thought to prevent heart disease.

11 As to the consumption of wine, the pyramid suggests that a *moderate* level of alcohol consumption, especially of red wine, also lowers the risk of heart disease and reduces overall mortality.

12 There are a few potential problems in all of this. Some point out, for example, that *advocating* a diet in which nearly 40% of the calories we take in comes from olive oil is problematic. Olive oil is pure 100% fat, and fat, no matter what its positive effects may be, is public health enemy number one.

Reading comprehension

1. What is good news about diet, as found in two conferences?
2. What is the Mediterranean diet?
3. Where did doctors in the 1950's find the lowest rates of heart disease?
4. What are two important parts of the Mediterranean diet?
5. How much red meat should be eaten, according to the article?
6. Why are olives and olive oil beneficial to one's health?
7. Why might small amounts of wine be healthy?
8. What are some of the arguments against the Mediterranean diet?

Vocabulary

Complete the gaps using the words in italics from the text above. You may have to change their form.

1. If something is extremely important because it will affect other things, it is _____.
2. Even _____ amounts of the drug can be fatal.
3. The number of years we are likely to live is our _____.
4. I could only _____ two hours a day to the project.
5. Most people walk at an average _____ of 5 km an hour.
6. The British market _____ 30% of the company's revenue.
7. Many experts _____ rewarding your child for good behaviour.
8. There is a high _____ of heart disease in men over 40.
9. These substances are known to be _____ to people with asthma.

Task 5 Speaking

a) Expressing opinion – phrases

Complete these phrases with the words below:

firmly – doubt – seems – opinion – convinced

I am _____ that...

I _____ believe...

It _____ to me...

In my humble _____, ...

There is no _____ that...

b) Does each thesis statement introduce an informative or persuasive speech? What sort of organisation could follow each statement?

Food additives are harmful and should be banned.

Additives are used to preserve food, enhance flavour and improve appearance.

c) Choose one of these topics. Write one informative thesis statement and one persuasive thesis statement for the topic. What method of organisation would you use in each speech?

GM foods Vegetarianism Paleo diet Studying English

d) Using your topic and thesis statement, prepare a one-minute speech – informative or persuasive. Introduce your topic, include a thesis statement, two supporting points and a concluding statement. Use the table below to make notes.

	Informative speech	Persuasive speech
Topic (State your topic clearly)		
Thesis statement (Be specific)		
First supporting point		
Second supporting point		
Conclusion (Paraphrase your thesis statement)		

Give your speeches. Can your partners guess which is persuasive and which is informative?

(Task 5 adapted from Lane, S. (2011). *Instant Academic Skills*. CUP.)