

Mediterranean diet may aid mental health in rheumatoid arthritis patients

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Greater adherence to a Mediterranean diet is associated with lower odds of depression in individuals with rheumatoid arthritis, according to a study [published](#) online July 5 in the *Journal of Health, Population and*

Nutrition.

Liya Ma, from Honghui Hospital at Xi'an Jiaotong University in China, and colleagues explored the association between adherence to a Mediterranean diet and depression in patients with [rheumatoid arthritis](#). Analysis included 1,148 patients with rheumatoid arthritis (aged ≥ 20 years), for whom 24-hour dietary recall interview data were available.

The researchers found that 25.26% of participants had depression. In adjusted analysis, high adherence to a Mediterranean diet was associated with lower odds of depression (odds ratio, 0.53). Higher consumption of vegetables (odds ratio, 0.54) and cereals (odds ratio, 0.63) drove this decrease in the odds of depression.

"In conclusion, we found that greater adherence to a Mediterranean diet was associated with the lower odds of depression in rheumatoid arthritis patients. Thus, our results provide evidence that greater [adherence](#) to the Mediterranean diet may improve [mental health](#) in adults," the authors write. "To elucidate whether true causal associations exist between diet and depression, further more rigorous cohort studies are needed."

More information: Liya Ma et al, Association between the adherence to Mediterranean diet and depression in rheumatoid arthritis patients: a cross-sectional study from the NHANES database, *Journal of Health, Population and Nutrition* (2024). [DOI: 10.1186/s41043-024-00572-w](https://doi.org/10.1186/s41043-024-00572-w)

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