

# Long-term healthy dietary patterns linked to healthy aging

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Higher long-term adherence to healthy dietary patterns is associated with an increased likelihood of healthy aging, according to a study presented at NUTRITION 2024, the annual meeting of the American Society for

Nutrition, held from June 29 to July 2 in Chicago.

Anne-Julie Tessier, R.D., Ph.D., from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Boston, and colleagues examined adherence to eight [dietary patterns](#) every four years using a validated food frequency questionnaire to assess the association of long-term adherence with healthy aging, defined as surviving to age 70 years or older and maintaining good self-reported cognitive function, physical function, and [mental health](#), while remaining free of chronic diseases.

Overall, 9,837 (9.2 percent) of the participants achieved healthy aging over 30 years of follow-up. The researchers observed significant associations for higher adherence to all dietary patterns with greater odds of healthy aging. Comparing the highest with the lowest quintile yielded odds ratios ranging from 1.43 to 1.85, with the weakest association seen for a healthful plant-based diet and strongest for alternative healthy eating. Associations were also seen for higher adherence to all dietary patterns with components of healthy aging. Higher intakes of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, [unsaturated fats](#), nuts, legumes, and low-fat dairy were associated with greater odds of healthy aging, while inverse associations were seen for higher intakes of trans fat, sodium, total meats, and red and processed meats.

"Our study provides evidence for dietary recommendations to consider not only [disease prevention](#) but also promoting overall [healthy aging](#) as a long-term goal," Tessier said in a statement.

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