The Mediterranean diet was efficacious for long-term weight loss in overweight or obese individuals compared with low-fat diets, but not compared with other diets (a low carbohydrate diet or the American Diabetes Association diet).

What is the effect?

The Mediterranean diet resulted in weight loss and a reduction in BMI and waist circumference over the longer-term in overweight or obese individuals.

It was more efficacious than a low fat diet, but not compared to other diets.

WHAT IS THE QUALITY OF THE EVIDENCE?

Primary outcomes measured:
- weight loss, BMI, waist circumference

A Mediterranean diet at 12 months resulted in:
- Reduction in body weight
- Reduction in BMI
- Reduction in waist circumference

KEY RESULTS

• Only 5 RCTs were included.
• Heterogeneity in design, population, and comparator meant the authors were unable to statistically pool the data across trials.
• 90% of included participants had established cardiovascular disease or type 2 diabetes, meaning the generalisability of the results to the general population with overweight or obesity who are otherwise healthy is unclear.

WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND?

Limitations

- Only 5 RCTs were included.
- Heterogeneity in design, population, and comparator meant the authors were unable to statistically pool the data across trials.
- 90% of included participants had established cardiovascular disease or type 2 diabetes, meaning the generalisability of the results to the general population with overweight or obesity who are otherwise healthy is unclear.

WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?

The Mediterranean diet resulted in weight loss and a reduction in BMI and waist circumference over the longer-term in overweight or obese individuals.

It was more efficacious than a low fat diet, but not compared to other diets.

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