MIND Diet No Better Than Control for Adults at Risk of Dementia

A diet that prioritizes plant-based foods such as leafy greens, nuts, fish, and olive oil—known as the Mediterranean-Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay (MIND) diet—didn’t protect against cognitive decline or improve brain characteristics such as total volume seen via magnetic resonance imaging, according to results from a 3-year clinical trial.

All 604 trial participants were aged 65 years or older without cognitive impairment but with a family history of dementia. Each had a body mass index higher than 25 and ate a suboptimal diet. The researchers randomly assigned them to follow the MIND diet or their usual diet while both groups cut their caloric intake by 250 kcal per day to lose weight. Although the MIND didn’t affect cognitive decline, participants in both groups experienced small increases in a global measure of cognition relative to baseline and they lost about 5 kg (11 lb).

"I[t] is possible that these interventions do not improve cognitive functioning or that it would take a longer period of adherence for an effect to be observed," the researchers wrote in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. —Emily Harris

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Note: Source references are available through embedded hyperlinks in the article text online.