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Cultural adaptations addressing diversity and health access in the Mediterranean Diet: A realist synthesis**Nana-Adjoa Bourne***Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, Canada*

Background: The Mediterranean Diet (MD) has been studied for its benefits, including metabolic risk factors since the 1950s. In recent years, debates around barriers to access within cultural and environmental fields have arisen within non-Eurocentric cultural backgrounds. Using data related to health benefits derived from dietary components, this review will produce a map of MD modifications to match various cultures.

Methods: Foods and constituents of the MD were compared and analyzed to assess benefits for both healthy and metabolic disease states using both empirical and theoretical approaches. Databases (PubMed and Cochrane) were searched using terms for cultural diets and metabolic disease outcomes associated with the MD (eg. HbA1C, cholesterol, waist circumference, weight, AST and ALT). One multicultural diet database was chosen to identify culturally-specific foods that match components of the MD to each cultural affinity.

Results: Cultural alternatives to foods and components of the MD exist, however there is modest research on the specific health effects of most culturally-adapted diets.

Discussion and Conclusion: Whilst some evidence gaps exist, it is feasible to translate most components of the MD to diets suitable for various cultural affinities. Future research is needed to examine the overall effects of these diets based on MD macronutrient presentation and the barriers associated with cultural-religious dietary practices and access to foods. Healthcare practitioners may benefit from this as a resource and to facilitate inclusivity and cultural competency for a broader range of dietary behaviours.

Biography

Dr. Nana-Adjoa Bourne, ND is an Ontario registered naturopathic doctor. Clinical interests focus in sports medicine, pain management and metabolic disease in population health. Dr. Bourne's clinical expertise in sports medicine and pain management initially stemmed from her work as a strength and conditioning specialist while studying Kinesiology at the University of Toronto. She continued honing these skills as a member of sports medicine focus shift at the Canadian College of Naturopathic medicine (CCNM) in Toronto, Canada. Through her training and education at the CCNM, Dr. Bourne received additional guidance and branched into metabolic health research during her residency which allowed her to reach a wider patient base, providing supportive and inclusive care. Dr. Bourne is committed to providing an inclusive, culturally safe space that is diverse and 2SLGBTQIA positive.