

The mediterranean diet, hepatic steatosis and nonalcoholic fatty liver disease

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Abstract

Purpose of review

The purpose of this review is to present the pathophysiological mechanisms and most recent clinical evidence regarding the role of the Mediterranean diet in preventing and treating nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).

Recent findings

Several components of the Mediterranean diet have proven benefits in controlling the pathophysiological mechanisms involved in NAFLD. However, the few clinical studies that have assessed the diet have involved low numbers of patients and lacked methodological rigor. The results of these studies suggest that the Mediterranean diet attenuates the progression of NAFLD once it is established, but does not contribute to preventing the disease in patients at risk.

Summary

Although there is a lack of clinical evidence derived from studies with high-quality methodology, the pathophysiological mechanisms of NAFLD shared with other associated pathologies suggest that there is a role for the Mediterranean diet in managing NAFLD. Studies with better methodology are needed to confirm the impact of the diet.