

[IMAGE]

Good Food Is Good for Your Ears

By Editorial Staff

Yes, you heard it right: Good food is good for your ears, more specifically your ability to hear. Research published in the *Journal of Nutrition* suggests consuming a healthy diet may help prevent age-related hearing loss.

The study tracked more than 80,000 women for 26 years as part of the Nurses' Health Study II. All subjects were 25-42 years of age at the start of the tracking period. Researchers evaluated dietary questionnaires completed by the women every two years, rating each woman's diet based on how closely they adhered to the Alternate Mediterranean Diet (AMED), the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet, and the Alternative Healthy Eating Index (AHEI). All three diets emphasize fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts and legumes, while minimizing intake of processed meats, sugar and salt.

listening - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Women who scored highest in terms of adherence to the AMED, compared to women who scored lowest, were 30 percent less likely to experience moderate to severe hearing loss by the end of the study period. Women who scored highest in terms of adherence to the DASH diet were 29 less likely to experience symptoms. No statistically significant differences in hearing loss were noted with regard to AHEI.

The researchers also analyzed a subgroup of women (33,000-plus) enrolled in the study who had medical conditions that could lead to hearing loss. In this analysis, all three dietary patterns decreased hearing loss: 47 percent lower risk for AMED, 46 percent lower risk for DASH, and 29 percent lower risk for AHEI.

Hearing, like sight, is an ability people often say they don't fully appreciate until it's taken away. Don't wait for that to happen and then live with the consequences. Talk to your doctor today about how a healthy diet and other lifestyle factors can help keep your hearing sharp for a lifetime.

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