

Ancel Keys and the study of the seven countries

Language

English

Ancel Keys (1904-2004) the North American physiologist and his international team of researchers established the medical and nutritional concept of the “Mediterranean Diet” in the 50’s of the 20th century. The importance and value of the Mediterranean food was proved, based on the results of the study and the comparative analysis of the prevalence of the coronary and cardiovascular diseases in seven countries in the world: Japan, Finland, the Netherlands, USA, ex-Yugoslavia, Italy and Greece).

In “Seven Countries, a Multivariate Analysis of Death and Coronary Heart Diseases” a study conducted based on the surveys and analysis of a sample of 12,700 individuals between 40 and 59 years of age reported a lower prevalence of heart diseases and longer longevity, comparing with other countries, in the populations living in the Mediterranean basin who consumed a certain type of food, engaged in daily physical exercise and activities of community socialization.

Subsequent studies not only confirmed Keys’ conclusions but also showed the actual importance of the “Mediterranean Diet” in the prevention of several non-transmissible behaviour diseases, such as certain types of cancer, diabetes, CVA’s...