Canned tuna is a great Mediterranean Diet food. It is rich in protein, low in fat and calories, and is an excellent source of essential omega-3 fatty acids, which science has shown to improve heart health and brain function. With a shelf life of over four years, canned tuna is also affordable and versatile. Here are 12 ways to easily incorporate this nutritional powerhouse into your daily meals.

1. Combine canned tuna with avocados, berries, apples, and mango chunks in a food processor to make a tangy, creamy spread.

2. Combine flaked tuna with hard-boiled eggs and hummus for a protein-packed sandwich filling or salad topping.

3. Toss canned tuna, roasted red peppers, chopped red onions, fresh basil, garlic and tomatoes with whole wheat pasta to make a filling, tasty dinner.

4. Combine cooked barley, tuna, and a sprinkling of cheese and microwave until heated through. Add milk to reach desired consistency.

5. Saute an onion, 2 stalks of celery, and a diced red pepper in olive oil. Add a can of tuna and a can of drained, rinsed cannellini beans and cook for several minutes until heated through.

6. Spoon an even layer of tomato sauce over whole wheat pizza dough. Add a can of flaked tuna, capers, olives, oregano, basil and olives, and bake until golden brown.

7. Combine tuna, beans, scallions, cherry tomatoes, olive oil, and lemon juice and serve over arugula.

8. Mix canned tuna with chili powder, lime juice and olive oil. Spread over a whole wheat tortilla, and add Greek yogurt, salsa, black beans, and sprinkling of cheese.

9. Mix canned tuna with artichoke hearts, kalamata olives, chopped canned hearts of palm, lemon juice, and cilantro. Roll in a large leaf of lettuce, drizzle with balsamic vinegar, and sprinkle with feta cheese.

10. Add canned tuna, diced plum tomatoes, sliced scallions, diced parsley, and olive oil to cooked bulgur. Toss and serve over greens.

11. Flake tuna, mix with olive oil, lemon juice and parsley, and cover a whole grain English muffin or roll. Sprinkle with mozzarella cheese and broil until the cheese melts.

12. Add canned tuna to boiled potatoes and mix with diced celery, lemon juice, wine, and olive oil. Add Dijon mustard to taste.

Learn more about healthy food choices at www.oldwayspt.org.