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It's never too late for your diet to give a longer life

People are never too old to take up the Mediterranean diet if they want to live longer, an Italian study suggests.

Researchers found that a diet rich in fruit, vegetables, nuts, beans, fish and olive oil, but low in meat, dairy foods and alcohol, reduced the risk of an early death in people over 65 by 25 per cent.

Scientists at the Neuromed Institute analysed the relationship between the Mediterranean diet and mortality in a sample of more than 5,000 people over 65 who were followed for eight years. They analysed other studies in several countries, involving 12,000 people.

The researchers said that the results

“clearly indicate” that the Mediterranean diet is an “authentic life-saving shield” able to significantly prolong the life of elderly people.

The authors, whose research is published in the *British Journal of Nutrition*, said that in a few years a quarter of all Europeans would be 65 or over.