



Healthy Eating Tip

Fight Inflammation and Joint Pain with Nutrition

Inflammation is a necessary and helpful response that occurs in the body when an outside threat exists like an infection or toxic chemicals. But too much inflammation can cause problems like digestive issues, joint damage, gum disease and even sleep disturbances. Persistent inflammation is also linked with heart disease, arthritis, diabetes and other chronic conditions.

Many studies suggest that the foods we choose can have a positive or negative affect on inflammation. Certain foods may reduce the risk of illness from inflammation and some are likely to make inflammation worse.

Foods to Reduce or Combat Inflammation

Although the idea of eating to reduce inflammation may be challenging, the good news is that you don't have to remember a whole new list of foods. Simply aim for an overall healthful diet, with a particular focus on the following:

- Tomatoes and red peppers
- Olive oil
- Green leafy vegetables such as spinach and kale
- Nuts like almonds and walnuts
- Fatty fish such as salmon, tuna and sardines
- Dark colored fruits such as strawberries, blueberries and cherries

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From Corporate Fitness Works Director of Wellness Services, Rebecca Johnson

Healthy Eating Continued...

Foods that May Increase Inflammation

On the flip side, there are certain foods that are likely to increase inflammation in your body. These include foods we generally strive to eat in moderation anyway, including:

- Fried foods such as fried chicken and French fries
- Sodas
- Refined carbohydrates such as white bread, pastries and high-sugar foods
- High-fat dairy products such as whole milk, butter and cheeses (lower fat options are a better choice for anti-inflammation purposes)
- High-fat and processed meats such as hot dogs

Moderation, Not Restriction

While having a list of foods to increase or reduce can be a helpful guide, it's important to remember that, for most people, most foods can fit into a healthful diet when moderation guides the way. If you enjoy foods from the list of those that may increase inflammation (don't we all?!), there's no need to completely remove them from your diet. In fact, restriction often leads to feelings of deprivation and cravings, which can make us overeat the very foods we are trying to avoid once we finally "cave in". The key is simply to shift the ratio a bit: more of the inflammation fighting foods and less of foods that inflame.

Sources:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu>