



Anti-inflammatory diet

Anti-Inflammatory Diet

Chronic inflammation can both lead to and aggravate a number of health conditions. The following dietary suggestions aim to decrease inflammation. These suggestions may be modified by your healthcare provider depending on your individual nutritional needs.

Grains

Choose whole grains instead of refined flour products and sugars. Some examples of whole grains include brown rice, whole wheat, rye, quinoa, oatmeal, millet, buckwheat, barley, and amaranth. Look for products that say "100% whole grain" on the label.

Protein Sources

Increase consumption of coldwater fish such as salmon, halibut, cod, and pollock as these are all rich in anti-inflammatory omega-3 fatty acids. Minimize intake of high mercury-containing fish like Tuna. Eat more beans such as lentils, kidney beans, fermented soybean products (tempeh or miso), mung beans, garbanzo beans, hummus, black beans, pinto beans and others, as long as these are tolerated well. Eat anti-inflammatory meats like wild game or grass-fed animal products in moderation. Minimize intake of grain-fed meats and full fat dairy products.

Vegetables

Colorful vegetables contain a myriad of phytochemicals that are anti-inflammatory. Aim to eat a "rainbow diet". Increase consumption of leafy green vegetables including kale, collard greens, spinach, and Swiss chard all of which contain high levels of antioxidants and beneficial phytochemicals. Leafy greens are also a plant source of omega-3 fatty acids. Increase consumption of cruciferous (cabbage family) vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, bok choy, green and red cabbage, arugula, and radishes. The cruciferous vegetables help the liver to eliminate toxins, hormones, and carcinogens.



Fruit

Eat a wide variety of different colored fruits including apples, pears, citrus fruits, berries, peaches, melon, cherries and more to get a variety of different flavonoids with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Pineapple and papaya are especially potent anti-inflammatory fruits.

Nuts/Seeds

Consume 1/8 to 1/4 cup of nuts per day - raw nuts are preferable. Especially beneficial nuts include pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, almonds, cashews, Brazil nuts, flaxseed, sesame seeds, and walnuts.

Fats

Use olive oil as main cooking oil for sautéing (low to moderate heat), for salad dressings, and for marinades. Flaxseed oil is an excellent plant source of omega-3 fatty acids and is great for salad dressings. (Flaxseed oil should not be heated.) Decrease consumption of foods high in omega-6 fatty acids, such as soybean, corn, safflower, and sunflower oils. Omega-6 fatty acids have been shown to increase production of pro-inflammatory markers in the body if eaten in excess. Many of these oils are widely used in processed foods, so be sure to read labels. Avoid hydrogenated fats/trans fats in the form of shortening, margarine, and in many baked and prepackaged foods.

Herbs/Spices

Many herbs and spices have strong anti-inflammatory properties. Ginger, turmeric, and saffron aid in digestion and can cool down inflammation. Use in sauces or for sautéing vegetables. Rosemary has been found to decrease inflammation in the body. Rosemary is great with fish, soups, vegetables, and in tomato sauces. Additional anti-inflammatory herbs include cinnamon, hops, nettles, thyme and garlic.

Tea

Black, green, red, and white tea (*Camellia sinensis*) may help reduce inflammation due to the high polyphenol and antioxidant content. Herbal tea infusions, such as rosehip and nettle, may also be beneficial.

Probiotics

Fermented foods are an excellent source of probiotic bacteria which help to keep the digestive tract healthy and may reduce inflammation. Food sources include miso, sauerkraut, yogurt, kefir, and kimchi.

