

# YOUR Anti-Inflammatory Diet

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## Inflammation is the complex, biological

response of the body set in motion when the immune system registers that something is wrong. This could be injury, infection, exposure to toxins, or emotional stress. It is an essential process to the body as healing would not occur without it, yet it is intertwined with every chronic disease that plagues our society.

For this reason, anti-inflammatory supplements and diets have become very popular. If you want to fight chronic disease = inflammation = pain, then you need to provide your body with the nutrients and building blocks it needs to

build healthy cells. It is really that simple! The complicated part is knowing what foods and how to incorporate them into your life. Unfortunately, many foods we regularly consume actually do the opposite - they take away from the body's ability to heal and limit inflammation.

The key to all anti-inflammatory diets is making sure your body gets everything it needs to make anti-inflammatory molecules. These molecules work in your body to limit pain and inflammation while allowing healing to occur. Imagine you want to build a wooden

bench for your garden... how could you possibly do it

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without any wood? The body is the same way - we can't expect our bodies to fight inflammation without the necessary weapons - ie - building materials. And the most important building material when it comes to anti-inflammation is good

fatty acids. If you have lots of 'good' fats you will make good, ANTI-inflammatory molecules. Bad fats will lead to PRO-inflammatory molecules. In addition to fats, your body requires "anti-oxidants" to support the anti-inflammatory process, which are mainly found in brightly colored fruits and vegetables.

Most people do know that fast food and snack foods are not the way to a healthy body, but they are often stumped on how exactly to give their body what it really wants and needs. So here's a list of foods you SHOULD EAT REGULARLY to get all the anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant power your body is craving:

- ★fatty fish , avocado, nuts and seeds, extra virgin olive oil, coconut
- ★lean meats, chicken, turkey, fish and seafood
- ★beans, tofu, eggs
- ★dark green vegetables (chard, kale, spinach, broccoli, bok choy...)
- ★bright colored vegetables (squash, peppers, carrots, tomatoes, beets...)
- ★fresh fruit (papaya, mango, banana, apples, pears, peaches...)
- ★berries (all types!)



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★whole grains (quinoa, brown rice, millet, spelt, amaranth...)

★whole grain pastas and breads in moderation

Great, you say... but what to DO with these foods....

To make it even easier for you, see the meal ideas to the right.

It is also key to remember that YOUR body is unique. If you learn to pay attention to the signals your body is sending you, you will soon recognize which foods agree with you and which don't. Do you feel tired after certain foods? Congested? Irritable? Then these foods are most likely causing inflammation in the body. Inflammatory foods for most people include: processed foods, alcohol, red meat, trans-fats, saturated fats, simple sugars and carbohydrates, preservatives, coloring agents and dyes. People can also react to chemicals in foods or groups of foods. For example, some people find that citrus and acidic foods (such as tomatoes) increase inflammation in their body. Others react strongly to the 'Nightshade' group of plants which includes potatoes, bell peppers, eggplant and tomatoes.

There are also simple blood tests to evaluate which foods YOUR immune system is reacting to. These tests look for immune markers (called antibodies) in order to evaluate if your body creates inflammatory molecules when exposed to various foods. Knowing exactly what to avoid can GREATLY decrease the inflammation and pain in the body.

(Ask about Food Sensitivity testing if you are interested.)

#### Breakfast Ideas

- ★steel cut oats (cooked with water) with added blueberries, chopped walnuts, cinnamon and almond milk
- ★rye bread with almond butter, fresh fruit
- ★sautéed spinach, onion and tomato frittata

#### Lunch Ideas

- ★large mixed salad with grilled chicken breast and olive oil & vinegar dressing
- ★brown rice, fish and grilled mixed vegetables
- ★chick pea and quinoa salad, mixed fruit salad

#### Dinner Ideas

- ★grilled salmon with brown rice and steamed kale
- ★baked potato (topped with olive oil and chives), lean beef and large garden salad
- ★tofu stir fry over whole grain couscous

#### Snack Ideas

- ★rice cakes with nut butter
- ★apples / fruits
- ★cut up vegetables dipped in hummus

#### Treats

- ★dark chocolate
- ★dried fruit and nuts
- ★coconut milk ice cream / yogurt