



Anti-Inflammatory Food Guide

How to reduce chronic inflammation naturally

What is inflammation?

Inflammation is an important and protective response that our body uses to help us stay alive. Our immune system will activate an inflammatory response to infection, illness, toxins, injury and other experiences like stress and even certain foods that your body sees as a threat to its survival.

There are two types of inflammation: acute (short-term) and chronic (long-term).

1. Acute Inflammation

Acute inflammation is a short-term immune response. We need acute inflammation to help us heal and repair. Signs our body is experiencing acute inflammation are: redness, pain, heat and swelling.

2. Chronic Inflammation

Chronic inflammation is much less helpful. It means your immune system has been left in a constant state of alert. It often occurs inside your body with subtle symptoms making them easy to overlook but if left unchecked, can lead to illness and dysfunction.

For more information see:

<https://melbournefunctionalmedicine.com.au/blog/chronic-health-inflammation>

How can I reduce inflammation?

The key to reducing inflammation lies in extinguishing those flames, balancing your autonomic nervous system and restoring balance to the body. Here are some of the ways you can reduce inflammation:

- Eat anti-inflammatory foods
- Avoid pro-inflammatory foods
- Natural supplements and herbs
- Restore gut health
- Avoid alcohol, cigarettes and other drugs
- Sleep more
- Stress less
- Exercise regularly

This guide provides information about the food you can eat and avoid to reduce chronic inflammation and to support your body on many other levels such as detoxification, gut health and longevity.



Anti-inflammatory Eating Plan

This eating plan is based on the latest evidence collated by The Institute for Functional Medicine on how to eat for optimum health. Eating this way is designed to be sustainable, delicious and enjoyable for life. The focus is more about what you DO include rather than what you don't.

The seven guiding principles to anti-inflammatory eating are:

7. EAT THE RAINBOW

Plant ("Phyto") nutrients are what give plant foods their rich colour and contain thousands of compounds that communicate with our cells to help them function. Eating a diverse range of plant based foods can have dramatic effects on the body - even in small increased amounts. Eat all the colours - red, orange, yellow, white, tan, green, blue and purple,

6. LOW IN SIMPLE SUGARS

Added sugar triggers many negative changes in the body and lays the groundwork to change the gut microbiota in a way that increases intestinal permeability, increasing inflammation. It can also contribute to overeating and obesity. Natural and artificial sweeteners in processed foods should be heavily limited or avoided.

5. MAKE IT FIBRE RICH

People living in a Western country who eat mostly processed foods are eating only 30% of the fibre their body needs for optimum function. Fibre helps the body feel full. A mix of insoluble and soluble fibre helps clean the digestive tract, improves transit time and traps toxins and cholesterol as well as providing food for good gut bacteria ensuring a balanced and healthy micro-biome.

1. WHOLE FOOD FOCUS

Whole, plant based foods are important for fibre and phytonutrients. Fibre is critical for optimum digestion and assists the body with daily detoxification. It also feeds the good bacteria in your digestive tract. Phytonutrients are compounds found in plants that offer anti-inflammatory and antioxidant benefits.

2. CHOOSE ORGANIC & CLEAN

Where you can, choosing 'clean' food helps reduce toxin exposure, increasing the liver's ability to eliminate toxins in the body. Clean eating also means reducing consumption of artificial colourings, additives, flavouring, preservatives, pesticides, insecticides, herbicides and even synthetic sweeteners. Make purchase decisions according to the annual "Dirty Dozen" and "Clean 15" lists published annually here: www.ewg.org.

3. EAT QUALITY PROTEIN

Proteins are the building blocks of life and health given their role in growth and repair as well as their role in stabilising blood sugar and insulin levels. Quality protein from animals is grass fed, free range which not just lowers toxin exposure but increases omega-3 fatty acids. Nuts, dairy, seafood, eggs, legumes and tofu are all protein rich foods.

4. EAT QUALITY FATS

Balancing your fat intake is a key factor in minimizing inflammation in the body. When it comes to fats, this plan: (1) eliminates trans fats (found in processed foods); (2) decrease intake of saturated fats and omega-6 fats from animal sources; and (3) increase intake of omega-3-rich fats from fish and plant sources. Quality sources of fat are coconut oil, butter from grass-fed cows, fish, leafy greens, nuts, avocado oil, extra virgin olive oil and seeds.



Foods to INCLUDE

Vegetables

Artichoke	Garlic
Asparagus	Green beans
Bamboo shoots	Horseradish
Beetroot	Jicama
Bok choy	Kohlrabi
Broccoli	Leeks
Brussels sprouts	Lettuce
Cabbage	Microgreens
Carrots	Mushrooms
Cauliflower	Okra
Celeriac root	Onions
Celery	Parsley
Capsicum	Peppers
Chard	Radicchio
Chervil	Radishes
Chives	Rocket
Cilantro	Spring onions
Cucumbers	Sea vegetables
Daikon	Shallots
Eggplant	Snap peas
Endive	Snow peas
Escarole	Spinach
Fennel	Sprouts
Fermented vegetables:	Zucchini
Kimchi,	Tomato
pickles,	Turnips
sauerkraut.	Water chestnuts
Greens: Beet,	Watercress
collard,	
dandelion, kale,	
mustard, turnip.	

Herbs and Spices

All herbs and spices

Starchy Vegetables

Parsnip
Pumpkin
Potato sweet
Potato white
Potato red
Plantain
Yam

Gluten Free Whole grains

Gluten Free
Amaranth
Buckwheat
Corn
Millet
Oats: Rolled, steelcut
Quinoa
Rice Basmati, black, brown, purple, red, wild
Sorghum
Teff

Beverages

Filtered water
Sparkling/mineral water
Fresh juiced fruits/vegetables
Coconut water
Low sugar kombucha
Tea: Black, green, herbal.

Fruit

Apple	Papaya
Apricot	Peach
Avocado	Pear
Banana	Persimmon
Blackberry	Plum
Blueberry	Pineapple
Cantaloupe	Pomegranate
Cherries	Raspberry
Coconut	Strawberry
Date	Tangerine
Fig	Watermelon
Grape	
Grapefruit	
Guava	
Honeydew	
Kiwi	
Lemon	
Lime	
Mango	
Nectarine	
Orange	

Condiments

Apple cider, rice, and balsamic vinegars
Coconut aminos
Organic broths (vegetable, chicken, beef)
Celtic sea salt
Lemon/lime juice
Mustards
Organic ketchup
Peppercorns
Red chili paste
Salsa without added sugars
Tahini
Wasabi
Wheat-free tamari

Foods to INCLUDE continued

Proteins

Lean, free-range, grass-fed, organically grown animal protein; non-GMO, organic plant protein; and wild-caught, low-mercury fish preferred.

Animal sources

Cheese
Cottage cheese
Feta cheese
Parmesan cheese
Ricotta cheese
Egg

Fish/Shellfish

Meat:

Beef, buffalo, pork, elk, lamb, veal.

Poultry (skinless):

Chicken, duck, turkey.

Organ meats

Plant sources

Mung bean
Edamame
Natto
Nutritional yeast
Spirulina
Tempeh
Tofu

Protein powder

Hemp
Pea
Rice
Whey

Nuts and Seeds

Almond
Brazil
Cashew
Chestnut
Chia
Flaxseed
Hazelnut
Hemp
Macadamia

Pecan
Pine
Pistachio
Poppy
Pumpkin
Sesame
Sunflower
Walnuts

Fats and Oils

Avocado
Butter
Chocolate, dark (70% or higher cocoa)
Coconut milk
Coconut cream
Ghee/clarified butter
Mayonnaise (unsweetened)
Olives

Oils, cooking:
Avocado, butter, coconut, olive, grapeseed, rice bran, sesame

Oils, salad: Almond, avocado, organic cold pressed canola, flaxseed, grapeseed, hempseed, olive (extra virgin), pumpkin seed, safflower (higholeic), sesame, sunflower (higholeic), walnut

Legumes / Beans

Adzuki beans
Black beans
Black-eyed Peas
Chickpeas
Broad beans
Kidney beans
Lentils
Lima beans

Mung beans
Peanuts
Runner beans

Dairy & Alternatives

Dairy

Kefir
Milk - Goat
Yoghurt - Greek

Non Dairy

Almond milk
Rice milk
Coconut milk
Macadamia milk
Soy Milk
Yoghurt - coconut
Yoghurt - soy
Yoghurt - almond



For more information about eating Gluten Free or Dairy Free, ask your health coach for our Gluten Free Dairy Free guide.

Foods to LIMIT or AVOID

Sugar

Artificial sweeteners
Agave
Agave nectar
Barley malt syrup
Brown rice syrup
Brown sugar
Cane sugar
Caramel
Corn sweetener
Fructose
Fruit juice concentrate
Golden syrup
High fructose corn syrup
Inulin
Maltodextrin
Maltose
Refined sugar
Treacle

In moderation

Maple syrup
Dried fruit
Stevia

Processed foods

Microwave popcorn
Chips
Packaged cakes
Packaged cookies
Pastries
Lollies
Chocolate bars
Bread
Crumpets
Pasta
High sugar cereals
Processed meats
Packaged salad dressings
& sauces

Other

Artificial colourings
Additives
Flavourings
Gluten containing foods
Preservatives
Added msg

Fats

Trans fats
Partially hydrogenated oils
Margarine
Vegetable shortenings
Non-grass fed animal fats
Non-organic vegetable & seed oils

Beverages

Alcohol
Soft drinks
Flavoured milk
Sweetened kombucha



Be sure to take into consideration foods you have a known allergy, intolerance or sensitivity to.

You may wish to list them above.

FAQs

My treatment notes are advising Dairy Free and Egg free but this guide says to include them?

Depending on your health picture, your practitioner may have suggested certain foods or food groups to be excluded from your diet.

Dairy and eggs, as well as gluten, are known as the most common foods to cause allergy, sensitivity or intolerance so often it is a good idea to eliminate or reduce them in your diet if you have been advised.

What is AIP and how does it fit in with anti-inflammatory eating?

AIP stands for Auto Immune Protocol and is one of the more restrictive food directions designed not only to limit inflammation but reduce anti-nutrient compounds known to cause leaky gut. It is often recommended to patients who present with an existing or suspected autoimmune condition.

If you'd like to understand more about AIP you can speak to your practitioner or health coach.

What about alcohol?

Alcohol is a form of sugar and added calories as well as being a toxic burden on the liver, furthermore it is associated with many types of cancer and chronic disease. Ask your practitioner to help determine whether moderate or occasional use of alcohol would be appropriate and consistent with your health goals.

It is wise to be across the latest Australian guidelines around alcohol consumption:

<https://www.cancer.org.au/about-us/policy-and-advocacy/position-statements/alcohol-and-cancer>

and <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/health-advice/alcohol>

Isn't red wine healthy?

Research has shown drinking modest amounts (1 glass with a meal and having alcohol free days) of red wine may reduce cardiovascular risk. The phytonutrients in red wine, such as resveratrol can relax the blood vessels, increase good cholesterol and bring blood sugar into balance.

You should weigh up the risks and benefits of alcohol consumption with your practitioner or even explore the growing range of non-alcoholic red wine on the market: <https://sansdrinks.com.au/>



FAQs continued

What about calcium?

If you think the anti-inflammatory diet looks a little low on dairy foods, you're right. It's lower in dairy than the National Dietary Guidelines advise, which recommend 2.5 - 4 serves of dairy foods every day, depending on your age and gender.

But calcium is abundant in many other foods including cooked spinach, cooked broccoli, almonds, sesame seeds, rocket (raw), sardines and salmon (with the bones).

Slow-cooking meat, including chicken, with bones is also a good way to get calcium into your diet without eating dairy.

Do coffee or tea have any benefits?

Studies have shown that caffeine tightens blood vessels, causing short-term, unfavourable changes in blood pressure. Also, caffeine increases cortisol, a stress hormone, which may lead to feeling more wired and "on edge." If you are sensitive to caffeine, it can cause a fast heart rate and abnormal heart rhythms.

On the flip side, coffee contains important phytonutrients like chlorogenic acid and caffeic acid, which may help the liver process blood sugar.

Needs, preferences, and sensitivities will vary from person to person so discuss these factors with your practitioner.

For those who enjoy the taste of coffee, a solution might be switching from caffeinated to decaffeinated (go for the low tox, swiss water method) coffee with no added sugar. A small amount of caffeine between 5-50mg can be found in decaffeinated coffee, so there would still be some effect.

Coffee may be a good choice for some, but green tea may be a better drink for most people. It contains caffeine, but not as much as a typical cup of coffee, and it can be purchased in non-caffeinated varieties.

Green tea contains anti-inflammatory and antioxidant phytonutrients. Drinking both green and black teas has been associated with a reduction in the risk of heart disease and stroke by 10 to 20 percent. Three cups per day appears to be the best amount for the most benefit overall.

FAQs continued

So it's true, food is medicine?

Yes! Your quality of life is largely based on how well your body can work, move, and act. By providing the body with fuel of the highest quality, we ensure that our bodies are able to function well and keep all of the body systems optimised.

What we eat is also a source of information for the body. With every bite we eat, food has the ability to turn on or off genes that control disease risk, lifespan, and metabolism. Certain foods can impact blood sugar, or even trigger allergic reactions, inflammation, or autoimmune responses.

Nutrigenomics is the new science that studies the impact of food choices on gene expression, that is proving the old adage of "You are what you eat" to be true.

The key is making an effort to choose nutrient-rich foods that send the right healthy signals to the body for positive gene expression and optimal health.



Tips on getting started

- Explore your local organic, health food store and farmers markets
- Take time to check in with your health goals and your 'why' behind wellbeing
- If you over-indulge or eat food you didn't plan to, forgive yourself and get back on the wagon :)
- Be prepared - take snacks with you when you leave the house
- Cook double batches so that you aren't having to cook all of the time making a big evening meal will give you leftovers for lunch the next day
- Learn to read labels and choose 'better' processed food
- Engage the support of your MFM Health Coach!

