

What is inflammation?

Inflammation (swelling) is a natural response of the body to protect itself from potentially harmful agents, such as infection. **Acute** (short-term) inflammation often has symptoms such as swelling and redness. **Chronic** (long-term) inflammation can damage cells in any part of the body; this type of inflammation may lead to many chronic diseases including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, and diseases affecting the brain and immune system. A diet that includes healthy foods in proper amounts is an important key to protect the body against chronic inflammation. This diet can be called an “**anti-inflammatory**” diet.

Anti-inflammatory foods – choose daily

Fruit

- Pick a variety of colorful choices: apple, banana, berries, cherry, citrus, grapes, kiwi, mango, melon, peach, pear and pineapple

Vegetables

- Pick a variety of colorful types: asparagus, beets, bell peppers, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, dark green leafy lettuce, mushroom, onion, sweet potato, tomato and zucchini

Whole grains

- 100% whole grains (wheat, rye, barley, oat, quinoa) - bread, cereal, pasta; brown rice, oatmeal and oat bran

Legumes

- Beans (black, edamame, fava, garbanzo, kidney, pinto, soy), lentils, and split peas

Unsaturated Fat

- Avocado, canola, grapeseed, walnut, and extra virgin olive oils, nuts, seeds and olives

Omega-3 Fats

- Cold water fatty fish (herring, mackerel, salmon, tuna), soy, seeds (chia, flax) and walnuts

Herbs & Spices

- Turmeric, ginger, cinnamon and garlic

Pro-inflammatory foods – choose sparingly

Saturated Fats

- Bacon, butter, cheese, cream, whole milk/ yogurt, high fat cuts of meat and processed meat (bologna, hot dog, salami)

Refined Sugar

- Candy, desserts and sugar sweetened drinks (punch, soda, sweet tea, lemonade)

Refined Grains

- White grain products (bread, cereal, crackers, pasta, rice), chips and pretzels

Sample meal plan

Breakfast

- 1 cup cooked oatmeal with 2 Tbsp. nuts, dash of cinnamon and unsweetened almond milk
- 1 fruit of choice
- 1 cup coffee or tea

Morning snack

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup raw or roasted nuts
- Water

Lunch

- Mixed greens salad, carrots, onion, pepper, cucumber and tomatoes
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chicken breast or beans (garbanzo, black)
- Extra virgin olive oil & vinegar
- 1 slice whole grain bread or roll
- 1 cup fruit of choice
- Water or tea

Afternoon snack

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup non-fat plain Greek yogurt with berries, 1Tbsp slivered nuts, 1Tbsp ground flax seed or chia seed
- Water

Dinner

- 4-6 ounces wild salmon
- 2 cups steamed vegetables
- 1 cup brown rice, quinoa or whole wheat pasta
- Water

References

Diet, nutrition, and the prevention of chronic disease. World Health Organization Technical Report Series. 2003

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition. December 2015.



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