



wellnews



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IN THIS ISSUE

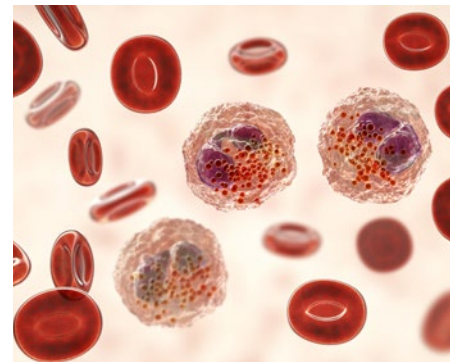
Ask the Expert 1
 Fitness 2
 Nutrition 3
 Stress and Mindfulness 4

ASK THE EXPERT

What You Need to Know About Inflammation

by Carla Ficorilli, M.S.

Many people think of inflammation in terms of external signs: swelling, bruising, redness and so on. But uncontrolled inflammation plays a role in almost every major disease, including cancer, heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer’s and depression.



When your cells are in distress, they release chemicals to alert the immune system.

The immune system sends its first responders — inflammatory cells — to trap the offending substance. As this chain of events unfolds, blood vessels leak fluid into the site of the injury, causing swelling, redness and pain. These symptoms might be uncomfortable, but they are essential for the health process. But here’s the problem: with chronic inflammation, your body is on high alert all the time. This prolonged state of emergency can cause lasting damage to your heart, brain, and other organs.

Many lifestyle factors have been shown to play a part in cellular inflammation: smoking, obesity, chronic stress and drinking alcohol excessively, for example. Fortunately, you can focus on lifestyle choices that reduce your risk of chronic inflammation.

Low-calorie diets and moderate exercise remain the surest thing for preventing degenerative inflammatory disease. Obesity is linked to high CRP(c - reactive protein) levels, as are “bad” fats and refined carbohydrates. Saturated and trans fats tend to increase the immune response, while omega-3 fatty acids (in fish oils) and good fats (such as olive and canola oils) may reduce it.

So, for now, follow mom’s advice: see a doctor regularly for checkups, follow a healthy diet, get regular exercise, lower stress, and avoid cigarettes.

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FITNESS

Exercises to Reduce Inflammation

by Samantha Douglas, M.S., Wellness Coordinator

Acute inflammation is a healthy response in the body, but can sometimes be uncontrolled. This leads to chronic inflammation that triggers the development of diseases. Many studies have shown that exercise is an important key to reducing inflammation in the body. A workout session does not have to be intense to have anti-inflammatory effects. Adding as low as 20 minutes of moderate exercise triggers the immune cells which fight off bacteria and infections in the body. Here are a few easy inflammation reducing exercises to add to your daily routine:

Walking A great low intensity choice and a good way to let your muscles recover. Reduces inflammation by pumping fresh blood and oxygen throughout your body.

Yoga & Deep Breathing Meditation and deep controlled breathing induces a state of mental and physical relaxation which is very powerful when wanting to reduce inflammation. A few poses to try include child's pose, bridge, supine twist, and triangle pose. Hold each pose for 5-7 breaths.

Strength Training Target major muscles groups at least 2 days per week. Resistance training can be used with machines, dumbbells, bands, or even your own body weight. Use lighter weights and focus on more repetitions. Workouts should challenge but not exhaust you. It is normal to feel a little soreness after your workouts.

Foam Rolling Improves flexibility, promotes digestion and circulation, and strengthens the core. Lying flat on the foam roller and using gravity to help apply pressure directly targets inflammation. Start with light pressure and build up as you feel more comfortable. Slowly roll each tender areas for a minimum of 10 seconds.

Besides reducing inflammation, other long-term health benefits of exercise include: improving metabolism, weight control, strengthening the muscles and bones, and reducing risk of cardiovascular disease. For more information on the anti-inflammatory benefits of exercise visit www.medicalnewstoday.com or for more on how you can improve your physical activity visit health.gov/moveyourway



ASPARAGUS AND GINGER FRIED RICE

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups cooled, cooked brown rice
- 2 tbsp. sesame oil (divided)
- 1 tbsp. minced or grated fresh ginger
- 2 scallions, finely chopped
- 1 lb. asparagus, cut into 1½ inch lengths
- 1 tbsp. reduced sodium soy sauce
- 1-2 tsp. red pepper flakes
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp. toasted sesame seeds (Heat in a dry skillet, over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, for two to three minutes or until the seeds turn brown)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Break up the cooled cooked rice into smaller clumps.
2. Heat a wok or large skillet over medium-high heat until a bead of water sizzles and evaporates on contact. Add 1 tbsp. of the oil and swirl to coat the base. Add the ginger and scallions and cook for about 30 seconds, until just aromatic.
3. Add the asparagus and stir-fry for about 3 minutes, until tender crisp.
4. Add the remaining oil to pan. Toss in the rice and break up any remaining clumps with a spatula. Continue to stir-fry until rice starts to turn golden, about 2 min.
5. Add the soy sauce and stir until mixed with the rice. Add the red pepper flakes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
6. Top with toasted sesame seeds. Serve.

Nutritional Information — 4 servings

Serving Size: ¼ of dish	
Calories: 285	Carbohydrate: 40g
Protein: 6g	Fat: 10g
Fiber: 6g	Sodium: 293mg

Adapted from Oldways.org by Robin Stahl, RDN, LD and Vanessa Mitchell, RDN

NUTRITION

Decreasing Inflammation Through Whole Grains

by Robin Stahl, RD, LD

Foods that fight inflammation in the body are ones that are not processed or are only slightly processed. These foods can be fresh, frozen or even canned. Focusing on fruit, vegetables and whole grains is a good place to begin building your anti-inflammatory diet. We will focus on whole grains.

A Quote from Oldways.org, “All grains start life as whole grains.” In their natural state growing in the fields, whole grains are the entire seed of a plant. This seed (also called a “kernel”) is made up of three edible parts – the bran, the germ, and the endosperm —protected by an inedible husk that protects the kernel from assaults by sunlight, pests, water, and disease.

You can find whole grains in the grocery store in several areas. The cereal aisle, the pasta and rice aisle, the bread aisle and there are even a few in the salty snacks aisle—popcorn is an example!

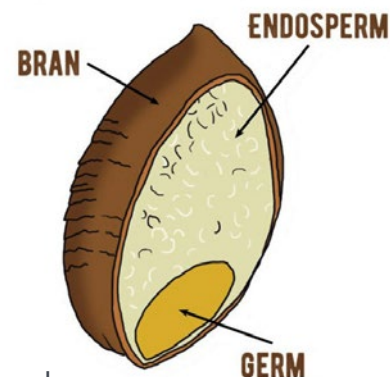
Ideas to choose whole, intact grains:

- Add barley to your vegetable soup
- Serve brown or wild rice instead of white
- Experiment with unfamiliar whole grains such as bulgur, buckwheat or farro
- Use oats as the binder in meat loaf

Ways to begin introducing whole grains into your diet gradually:

- Choose whole grain crackers and bread (“whole grain” on ingredients list)
- Mix whole grain cereal with usual processed cereal
- Bake oatmeal cookies

GRAIN'S ANATOMY



Adopt some of these concepts into your usual shopping and cooking habits. In time, your diet will become enriched with antioxidants and deficient in inflammatory foods. Your body will be equipped to naturally battle inflammation. Choose with intention!

flavorpalooza.com/your-complete-anti-inflammatory-foods-list

wholegrainscouncil.org/whole-grains-101

oldways.org



There are many research-backed ways to reduce stress, including talking with a friend.

STRESS AND MINDFULNESS

Stress and Inflammation: Why It's Bad News

by Carla Ficorilli, M.S.

When you're stressed your body goes into what's called the fight-or-flight response, releasing things like cortisol, adrenaline, and glucose into the bloodstream. The fight-or-flight response itself is meant to be short term. But when you're in that state chronically, the inflammatory response is set up, leading to constant tissue breakdown and impairment of the immune system.

Inflammation is the body's response to a threat, such as a bacteria or virus, or even a psychological or emotional stressor. In response, the immune system sends out an army of chemicals called pro-inflammatory cytokines to attack the invaders. These pro-inflammatory cytokines usually do their job and then disappear, but when stress is chronic, the stress-inflammatory response cycle is repeated regularly, and inflammation starts to cause harmful effects on the body. Chronic conditions linked to stress include Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA), Cardiovascular Disease, Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), and Depression.

There are many research-backed ways to reduce stress: aerobic exercise, yoga, meditation, journaling, talking with a friend, and breathing in lavender or scented candles. We essentially have to learn how to change our response to situations in our environment. Taking time to be outdoors, in nature, and with other people—the opposite of some of our work-focused, isolated, and sedentary modern lifestyles—works wonders to reduce stress.

A study published in *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, June 2016, found that subjects who meditated regularly had lower levels of cortisol; meditators also had a less-pronounced inflammatory response. Similar results have been linked to the regular practice of yoga, which was found to lower levels of cortisol and decrease inflammation.

Although the same stress-reduction method might not work for everyone, every form of stress reduction does require patience but can be highly beneficial.

For more information:

www.apa.org/helpcenter/stress-body

www.rn.com/featured-stories/stress-inflammation-immunity

You can now get information from your health coach through social media!

Click the links below:

