



## Eat these foods to fight inflammation in your body

### What is inflammation?\*

When a part of your body is irritated, it may respond by swelling. For example, bacteria may cultivate in a wound or a finger with a splinter. Inflammation is your body's natural reaction to something harmful that may be happening in your body. But ongoing inflammation can be harmful, leading to autoimmune disease, heart disease, diabetes and psoriasis. While there's no exact diet for treating inflammation, eating a variety of these nutrient-packed foods can help:



**Fruits:** Full of antioxidants, fruit helps build your immune system by protecting against free radicals and oxidization, which create inflammation. Eat a color variety of fruit such as blackberries, raspberries, oranges, cherries, strawberries, grapes and cantaloupe. This way, you'll be sure to get lots of nutrients and powerful, protective chemicals called phytonutrients.



**Vegetables:** Similar to fruit, vegetables help build up our body's immunity and fight inflammation. All vegetables are healthy, but some have more antioxidants and phytonutrients. These include broccoli, cabbage, leeks, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, kale, spinach, carrots, bell peppers, squash, sweet potatoes and onions.



**Nuts and seeds:** These small foods are full of good nutrition. They combine protein, healthy fats and fiber, which all help reduce inflammation. Some of the best options are almonds, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, cashews and hemp seeds.



**Whole grains:** These are anti-inflammatory foods because of their high fiber content and antioxidants. Examples include quinoa, barley, steel cut oats, buckwheat and rye.



**Beans and legumes:** These plant-based proteins are a great source of fiber and have plenty of antioxidants, minerals and phytonutrients. They include lentils, peas and all different types of beans (black, pinto, white, kidney and garbanzo).



**Fats and oils:** Make sure to include healthy oils such as olive or canola in your diet, and foods like avocados and macadamia nuts. These have monounsaturated oils. Polyunsaturated fats are also good for you, especially omega-3 fats found in oily fish such as salmon, sardines, trout, mackerel and herring. Omega-3s are also found in walnuts, chia seeds and flaxseeds.



**Miscellaneous:** Other anti-inflammatory foods include dark chocolate (the less processed the better), fresh herbs and spices (cinnamon, curry, dill, rosemary, ginger, mint, cayenne and turmeric), spirulina, mushrooms, tea and red wine in moderation. These all have phytonutrients and antioxidants – great for fighting inflammation.



**Foods to limit or avoid:** Keep processed foods to a minimum. Try not to eat packaged chips, cookies and desserts, fast food and sugar-sweetened drinks. Also limit oils such as corn, safflower, sunflower and cottonseed. Avoid unhealthy saturated fats including red meat, whole-fat dairy and margarine. Eliminate trans fats from your diet (anything that has partially hydrogenated oil in the ingredients). By limiting refined grains, saturated fats and added sugar, you leave room for fruits, vegetables, nuts and whole grains.

## TIPS



**Maintaining a healthy body weight for your height is critical because extra fat can trigger inflammation.**



**Getting a good night's sleep and enough sleep is also important because it helps your body rest and recover. And try to minimize stress.**



**Practice relaxation methods that work for you (yoga, meditation, deep breathing). It's especially important to get regular exercise (at least 150 minutes a week) to strengthen your body and fight inflammation.**

\*U.S. National Library of Medicine website: What is Inflammation? (Accessed August 2017): [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](http://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov).

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