

Anti-Inflammatory Foods

Many foods can either induce or reduce inflammatory processes in our body. Although stress, lack of exercise, genetics and smoking can all promote inflammation, diet is one of the main contributors to inflammation.

Foods that induce inflammation contain:

- Processed meats: lunch meats, hot dogs and sausages all contain chemicals called nitrites that are associated with increased inflammation
- Refined carbohydrates and added sugar: sodas, pastries, presweetened cereals, candy, white bread, white pasta, potatoes and any food containing high fructose corn syrup
- Saturated fats: high-fat meats, full-fat dairy products, eggs, butter, cream, cheese and products made with coconut or palm kernel oils
- Trans fats: most processed food and fast food; examine the ingredient list for hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils and beware of margarine and vegetable shortening

Foods that reduce inflammation contain:

- Antioxidants: colorful fruits and vegetables, including blueberries and strawberries, are full of antioxidants — aim for 5 cups of fruits and vegetables daily
- Fiber: whole grains, fruits and vegetables
- Monounsaturated fats: olive oil, avocado, walnuts, cashews and almonds
- Omega-3 fatty acids: salmon, herring, black cod, butterfish, walnuts, omega-3 fortified eggs or ground flaxseed
- Soy products: soybeans, tofu and soy milk contain isoflavones which decrease inflammation in the body
- Water: water is the best source of hydration for the body; tea, especially white, green or oolong, also has anti-inflammatory properties