



Dr. Carb on...

Inflammation / Weight Gain / Detoxification / Chronic Disease

Most common diseases of the human body are associated with a chronic inflammatory state, including heart disease, diabetes, cancer, arthritis, asthma, fibromyalgia, digestive disorders, hypertension, obesity, as well as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease. A pro-inflammatory environment in most instances is fueled by poor dietary habits. Foods and beverages have such a profound effect on our body's systems that the regular choices we make about what to eat and drink should be granted the same careful consideration we would give to long-term medication use. There is strong evidence to suggest that the high rate of chronic disease and the enormous health care costs in the U.S. are largely due to Americans overdosing daily on a fatty, starchy, sugary, salty diet.

Diet

Pro-inflammatory foods will increase inflammation, increase pain from the inflammation, and also raise the risk for chronic disease. Toxic foods will stress the body's immune and digestive systems, often resulting in fatigue and poor healing. These types of foods also tend to be acidic to the body's chemistry. Follow the guidelines below to choose healthier foods and beverages for the vast majority of your meals. Permanently eliminate any offending pro-inflammatory or toxic foods or beverages that seem to be aggravating any chronic conditions.

Foods to Avoid:

- Sugar, high fructose corn syrup, or artificial sweeteners
- Partially hydrogenated oils and trans fatty acids (shortening, margarine, dressing)
- Polyunsaturated vegetable oils (corn, soybean, safflower, sunflower)
- Processed foods (packaged, boxed, or canned foods, most frozen foods)
- Junk food (candy, cookies, donuts, pastries, pies, chips, pretzels, crackers, frosting)
- Fried food (fried chicken, French fries, onion rings, wings)
- Fatty red meat and pork (burgers, hot dogs, sausage, bacon, salami, bologna)
- Refined grains (most cereals, breads and pasta, white rice)
- Soda, alcohol, blended coffee drinks, energy drinks, fruit juice
- Dairy (milk, ice cream, cheese, flavored yogurt)
- Egg yolks

Foods to Eat:

- Vegetables (best consumed with proteins – favor leafy greens, beets, sweet potatoes)
- Fruits (best consumed alone – limit dried fruit to raisins and prunes)
- Raw nuts and seeds (except peanuts)
- Wild salmon, sardines, and other fresh fish (avoid shellfish)
- Organic or free range poultry, turkey, game hens and other lean meats (grass-fed)
- Extra virgin olive oil, almond or avocado oil (coconut oil for high temp cooking)
- Whole grains (oatmeal, brown rice, sprouted grains, quinoa)
- Water, herbal and organic green teas
- Egg whites

Important considerations:

1. Total calories matters, for any one meal and for any one day – don't overdo it
2. One meal should be about 25% protein and 75% vegetables by volume. Carefully moderate grain intake
3. Some people should avoid potatoes, tomatoes, and eggplant (nightshade plants contain solanine)
4. Some people should avoid grass-related grains (wheat/rye/barley) due to gluten intolerance
5. For occasional alcohol consumption, drink red wine or stout (dark) beer
6. For occasional "sweets" consumption, eat a piece of organic dark chocolate
7. Ideal ratios: omega-6/omega-3 (2:1), sodium/potassium (1:1.5), calcium/magnesium (2:1) – the typical American diet is *relatively deficient* in omega-3, potassium, and magnesium
8. Anyone overweight or on anti-inflammatory medication is probably in a systemic pro-inflammatory state
9. For bowel irregularity, add two tablespoons of psyllium husk (soluble fiber) to 12 oz. water and drink daily
10. If you are serious about reducing inflammation, excess weight, or toxicity, you **MUST** keep a food diary

Nutrition

Most people with chronic problems will benefit from a daily multivitamin. Ensure that you are getting the recommended daily allowances of vitamin D₃ (1000 IU), magnesium (400mg), and omega-3 fatty acids (1000mg). Enhanced supplementation includes a daily probiotic and Coenzyme Q10 (100mg).

Lifestyle

The next step is to look at habits that may be contributing to any toxic exposures. Reduce as many of these potential stressors as possible to avoid any added cumulative strain on your system.

- Medications - Interactions between prescription and/or over-the-counter meds are common. Coordinate the reduction of as many medications with your MD as possible.
- Mold / mildew / dander / dust exposure – Clean your home environment of potential irritants, paying close attention to your carpet, drapes, mattress, pillow, furniture, air ducts, sheets and blankets. Open the windows daily to cross ventilate your home.
- Food preparation – Keep cutting boards, knives, and sponges clean at all times. Cover and refrigerate unused food quickly and discard leftovers after two days.
- Hygiene – Regularly clean your toothbrushes and hair brushes. Try using natural soaps, cleansers, deodorants, toothpaste, body lotions, cosmetics, hair sprays and coloring.
- Household items – Air fresheners, laundry detergent, fabric softeners, bleach, cooking sprays, and cleaning products that you come into contact with should be reviewed.
- Outdoor and indoor hobbies – Exposure to inhalants such as glue, paint, and pesticides, or contact irritants such as certain plants, solvents, or rough materials should also be reviewed.
- Air and water – If you have air or water filters, be sure to change the filters regularly, including the air filter for your central heater and the water filter for your ice maker. Filter out the chlorine in your drinking and shower water if possible.
- Sleep – Sleep is like food in that you need just the right amount. Too little or too much are counterproductive and you can't really make up in a weekend what have you missed all week. Most adults require 7-8 hours of sleep per night.
- Hydration and fluid exchange – Drink water throughout the day and try to sweat passively 10-15 minutes via hot tub, sauna, steam room, or bath several times per week.
- Exercise – Lack of activity is harmful to your physical and mental health. Minimal exercise recommendations are 20-30 minutes sessions four days per week (e.g. fast-paced walking).