

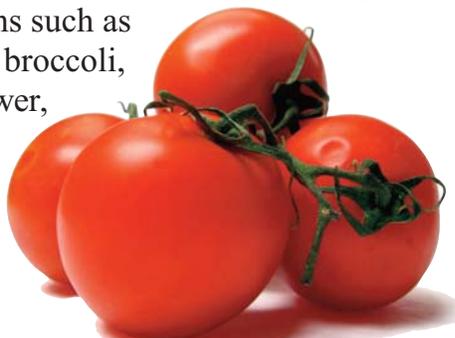
Foods can Fight Inflammation

There are two kinds of inflammation: acute and chronic. Acute inflammation is the body's short-term response to an injury or infection. This type of inflammation goes away when the body is healed. Chronic inflammation occurs when there is an on-going low level of inflammatory compounds circulating in the body. Chronic inflammation can lead to a higher risk of heart disease, cancer, stroke, Alzheimer's, and dementia.

Chronic inflammation can be caused by smoking, drinking too much alcohol, lack of exercise, not enough sleep, excess weight and poor eating habits. Eating a lot of refined grains, red meats, processed meats, sugar sweetened beverages, sweet desserts, high-fat dairy foods, solid fats like stick margarines, and other highly processed foods can lead to weight gain and increase the inflammatory compounds in the body.



A healthy diet and losing weight are the two best strategies to reduce chronic inflammation and the risk of chronic diseases. Start by eating more fatty fish, like salmon, herring, or mackerel, two to three times a week. Soft tub margarines and vegetable oils contain healthy fats. Other foods with healthy fats include almonds, walnuts, chia seeds, and ground flax seeds which can be sprinkled on cereal, salads, or combined into casseroles. Replace refined grains with more whole grains, such as brown rice, barley and oatmeal. Cut back on foods with added sugars, such as sweetened beverages and desserts. Eat more fruit, especially berries and citrus fruits. Work on adding more vegetables to your diet such as dry beans such as kidney beans or garbanzo beans, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale, cauliflower, spinach, onions, red bell peppers, tomatoes, and yellow squash. Some seasonings like cinnamon and tumeric have also been shown to help reduce inflammation.



Adapted from <http://www.environmentalnutrition.com>, Journal of Nutrition, National Center for Biotechnology, SAGE Journals, and the Journal of American College of Cardiology

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