

Pro-Inflammatory and Anti-Inflammatory Foods

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Pro-inflammatory foods accelerate the aging process. Here's a basic list of pro- and anti-inflammatory foods.

Simple rule of thumb: If it contains flour, and/or sugar or other sweetener, it will be pro-inflammatory. Sugary, starchy foods are poor nutritional choices and will not only pack on excess pounds, but they will make you look older than your years.

Regrettably, pro-inflammatory foods are the typical American diet. Even if all you can do is to minimize the amount of pro-inflammatory foods that you eat, your body will thank you for it.

Try to avoid eating processed foods as much as possible as processed foods contain polyunsaturated and partly hydrogenated fats, a big no-no as far as inflammation and your health overall. An anti-inflammatory diet is basically a healthy, low fat diet.

Pro-inflammatory foods

- Bagels
- Breads, rolls, baked goods
- Candy
- Cake
- Cookies
- Cereals (except old fashioned oatmeal)
- Cornstarch
- Corn bread, corn muffins
- Corn syrup
- Crackers
- Croissants
- Doughnuts
- Egg rolls
- Fast food
- French Fries
- Fruit juice -- choose the fruit instead (enzymes have been killed in juices)
- Fried foods

- Flour
- Granola
- Hard cheese (except for feta and grating cheeses, such as Romano and Parmesan)
- Honey
- Hot dogs
- Ice cream, frozen yogurt, Italian ices
- Jams, jellies and preserves
- Margarine
- Molasses
- Muffins
- Noodles
- Pancakes
- Pastry
- Pie
- Pita bread
- Pizza
- Pasta
- Popcorn
- Potatoes
- Pudding
- Relish
- Rice (white)
- Sherbet
- Shortening
- Snack foods, including: potato chips, pretzels, corn chips, rice and corn cakes, etc.
- Soda
- Sugar
- Tacos
- Tortillas
- Waffles

Reduce Inflammation in Your Diet

Food allergies or asthma are often indicators of systemic inflammation. Itchy skin, hives, acne, and eczema can also mean inflammation. People with these symptoms, as well as high blood pressure, water retention, headaches, and arthritis could benefit from an anti-inflammatory diet.

Most people will recognize the improvements in their overall health.

Significant weight loss is a bonus for many people.

Anti-Inflammatory Fruits and Vegetables

Avoid nightshade fruits and vegetables, such as potatoes and eggplant if your goal is to reduce inflammation, as they are known to aggravate the situation. Although tomatoes are on the alkaline food chart, they can be pro-inflammatory.

The following fruits and vegetables exhibit anti-inflammatory properties. Include a wide variety of the following in your diet:

Fruits

- Strawberries
- Blueberries
- Acai berries
- Cantaloupe
- Pink grapefruit
- Rhubarb
- Cranberries
- Pineapple (fresh)
- Apples
- Tomatoes
- Acerola (West Indian) cherries
- Avocados
- Black currants
- Guavas
- Kiwifruit
- Kumquats
- Papaya
- Raspberries
- Lemons
- Limes
- Mulberries
- Oranges
- Peaches

Vegetables

- Garlic
- Broccoli
- Onions (green & spring)
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Spinach

- Sweet potatoes/ yams
- Collard greens
- Bell peppers
- Bok Choy
- Broccoli sprouts
- Brussels sprouts
- Cauliflower
- Chard
- Fennel bulb
- Green beans
- Kale
- Leeks
- Olives
- Turnip greens

Anti-Inflammatory Meats/Seafood

Choose grass-fed animal products. Buy organic meats when possible. Choose wild-caught fish over farm-raised. Wild fish tend to have more omega-3 fatty acids than do farm-raised fish.

Meats/Eggs

- Duck
- Goose
- Flank steak (beef)
- Sirloin steak
- Prime rib
- Wild game meats, like elk, bison, or deer
- Eggs (vegetarian fed, free-range, omega 3, organic)
- Turkey (white breast)
- Quail
- Pheasant
- Chicken (white breast)

Seafood

- Salmon (wild-caught only)
- Tuna (especially Albacore)
- Herring
- Halibut
- Oysters
- Trout (especially Rainbow)
- Sablefish
- Anchovies
- North Atlantic mackerel

- Cod
- Sardines
- Snapper fish
- Striped bass
- Whitefish

- Cashews
- Macadamia
- Flaxseeds/Linseed
- Sunflower seeds
- Brazil

Anti-Inflammatory Fats and Oils

Buy organic oils to avoid pesticides and chemicals in the fats you consume. Choose butter from grass-fed cows, and make it organic. Watch for sugar content in salad dressings, and use them sparingly on salads.

- Extra virgin olive oil
- Coconut oil
- Organic butter
- Almond oil
- Avocado oil

Spices:

- Turmeric
- Ginger
- Curry
- Thyme
- Cinnamon
- Rosemary
- Mint
- Basil
- Cloves
- Parsley
- Licorice
- Oregano
- Cayenne peppers
- Chili peppers
- Cocoa (at least 70% cocoa chocolate)

Anti-Inflammatory Nuts and Seeds

Most nuts and seeds are anti-inflammatory. Be sure to include plenty of all types in your diet. While walnuts and cashews are considered anti-inflammatory, they are also on the acidic food chart.

- Almonds
- Walnuts
- Hazelnuts

Anti-Inflammatory Grains and Legumes

Most grains are considered pro-inflammatory since they are high in carbohydrates, yet low in antioxidants. For this reason, grains are to be limited. Avoid corn, hominy, and white rice. The healthiest grains are whole grains. Here are some good choices.

- Quinoa
- Steel cut oats
- Barley
- Buckwheat
- Rye
- Brown rice

Legumes

- Garbanzo beans
- Lentils
- Dried beans of all types
- Peas

Anti-Inflammatory Beverages

Steer clear of sodas and sugary juice drinks. Any drink with high fructose corn syrup should also be avoided. These are the best choices:

- Filtered water (6 to 8 glasses per day)
- Black tea
- Herbal teas
- Green tea