



Dr. DeeAnna Merz Nagel

Fight Chronic Inflammation by Changing the Way You Eat

Recent headlines show that awareness is growing about the connection between chronic inflammation and many serious health conditions. In fact, it appears that chronic inflammation may be the cause – rather than a symptom – of these conditions.

Medical experts now believe that your diet and other lifestyle strategies can play a major role in preventing this dangerous inflammation.

Here's what you need to know about chronic inflammation and how to fight it.

The Facts About Inflammation

1. **Acute inflammation.** Acute inflammation is good for you. In fact, it's necessary for the healing process. When you get an injury or infection, blood flow increases to the damaged area. Special cells start removing irritants and damaged cells.
2. **Chronic inflammation.** On the other hand, inflammation can undermine your health when it fails to shut off. Even though the symptoms may be invisible, ***chronic inflammation appears to play a role in heart disease, cancer, diabetes and maybe even Alzheimer's disease and depression.***
3. **Benefits of an anti-inflammatory diet.** Eating natural, unprocessed foods instead of sugar and processed foods can alleviate the inflammation and greatly strengthen your health.

Food Choices That Fight Chronic Inflammation

1. **Cut down on processed foods.** ***Steering clear of processed foods is a quick way to avoid many inflammatory agents.*** These include omega-6 fatty acids, trans fats

and refined carbohydrates. If it comes in a package or a box, I don't eat it.

2. **Emphasize plant-based foods.** *Making plant-based foods the mainstay of your diet will automatically increase your supply of antioxidants and important phytochemicals that act as anti-inflammatory agents.* Aim for at least 5 servings a day of vegetables and fruits.
3. **Eat more fish.** Omega-3 fatty acids are especially effective at reducing swelling. Eat fish at least twice a week. Pick the healthy-fat varieties including tuna, salmon and mackerel.
4. **Switch to whole grains.** Opt for whole grains whenever possible. Many restaurants are now offering a choice, so order brown rice instead of white. I personally limit grains but when I do indulge, I eat quinoa, millet or brown rice.
5. **Indulge in olive oil.** The ingredient oleocanthal in olive oil is another inflammation buster. It's what gives extra-virgin olive oil its peppery taste. Use organic. My favorite brand is Pompeian.
6. **Limit the red meat.** Research findings are mixed, but a diet high in red meat has been found to make rheumatoid arthritis symptoms worse. Saving steak for special occasions may improve your overall health, and it's certainly good for your heart.
7. **Spice it up.** *Certain spices prevent inflammation while making your food taste better.* Be generous with the ginger, curry, clove, black cumin and cinnamon.
8. **Shop around.** It seems like there's a new diet book published every week promising anti-inflammatory effects. Find what works for you. *One safe strategy is to stick with Mediterranean style diets that get high ratings across the board.*

Additional Strategies That Fight Chronic Inflammation

1. **Lose weight.** Extra pounds put an extra burden on your joints and vital organs. Trim down safely with a balanced diet and regular exercise.
2. **Manage stress.** *Elevated stress hormones contribute to inflammation.* Practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing or taking long baths.
3. **Quit smoking.** Smoking is another irritant. Even if you've tried to give up tobacco in the past, consider taking another run at it. New methods are being introduced all the time to make it easier.
4. **Consult your doctor.** Many new discoveries about chronic inflammation have emerged in the past year. Your doctor can help explain the findings and what they

mean for you.

A healthy diet can help reduce your risk of chronic inflammation, enabling you to live a longer and more active life. Eat a variety of whole foods including plenty of fruits and vegetables and talk with your doctor about your individual health concerns.

Let's Recap all of that with 15 Strategies to Fight Inflammation

Your immune system protects you from germs and other foreign substances that could make you sick by making parts of your body heat up and swell. However, sometimes it goes too far. That's when such inflammation become chronic as a response to stress, junk food, or other lifestyle triggers.

This chronic inflammation is associated with many serious health issues, including diabetes, heart disease, certain cancers, arthritis, fatigue, and depression. To reduce your risk, you may need to change your diet and other daily practices.

Start with these ideas for following an anti-inflammatory lifestyle.

Eating to Reduce Inflammation:

1. **Focus on plants.** Most vegetables and fruits are rich in protective compounds like antioxidants and polyphenols. Load up on spinach, kale, cabbage, berries, and citrus fruit. Some vegetables like asparagus and sweet potatoes also serve as prebiotics that tighten your gut and lower inflammation.
2. **Limit refined carbohydrates.** On the other hand, foods like white bread and snack cakes have been stripped of fiber and nutrients. They encourage chronic inflammation and weight gain.
3. **Steam and grill.** Your cooking methods matter too. Instead of frying with oil, try steaming with water or grilling with dry heat.
4. **Drink coffee.** Moderate amounts of coffee also provide beneficial polyphenols. **Just steer clear of the flavored coffee creams that are full of artificial thickening agents and sweeteners.**

5. **Add garlic.** Many natural seasonings have anti-inflammatory properties. Spread roasted garlic on bread or add it to mashed potatoes and homemade pizza.
6. **Choose healthy fats.** Not all fats are created equal. Monounsaturated and omega-3 fats help to decrease inflammation. Good sources include olive oil, nuts, and fatty fish. By contrast, saturated fats aggravate inflammation, so go easy on the red meat and whole fat dairy products. Avoid trans fats.

Other Lifestyle Changes to Reduce Inflammation:

1. **Lose weight.** You can experience chronic inflammation even if you're thin. Still, maintaining a healthy weight makes you less vulnerable.
2. **Exercise regularly.** Exercise has an overall positive effect. While an intense workout may cause temporary inflammation, it enhances your health in the long run.
3. **Drink water. Staying hydrated is essential.** Quench your thirst with plain water and tea instead of soda and juice. And try not to drink from plastic bottles.
4. **Brush and floss.** Bacteria from your mouth and gums can travel to the rest of your body. Aim to brush and floss for at least 2 minutes twice each day.
5. **Use natural cleansers.** Check the labels on your household cleaners and personal beauty products. You may be able to avoid potential toxins by buying organic brands or using plain vinegar and baking soda. I use Thieves Household Cleaner from Young Living.
6. **Quit smoking and limit alcohol. Tobacco and alcohol aggravate inflammation.** Many adults need more than one attempt to become tobacco-free, and combining nicotine therapy with counseling may lead to success this time.
7. **Check your medication.** Some over-the-counter and prescription drugs have side effects that reduce inflammation. If your doctor recommends that you take aspirin daily or prescribes statins to lower your cholesterol, you can consider this a bonus.

8. **Sleep well.** Most adults need about 8 hours sleep to keep their minds and bodies strong. Go to bed and wake up on a consistent schedule and keep your bedroom dark and quiet. And keep those electronic devices away from your bedroom when you are catching your zzzz's.
9. **Relax and refresh. Managing stress plays a major role.** Find a relaxation practice that works for you such as daily meditation or taking long walks. If you are having a difficult time with managing stress, consider a [Private Session](#) with me.

You can reduce chronic inflammation by watching what you eat and drink and making other positive lifestyle choices. Protect your wellbeing and support healthy aging by bringing chronic inflammation under control.

DeeAnna's Cabbage Soup Stock

In a large stock pot boil 1 medium cabbage head* cut into quarters with 3 or 4 stalks of celery (the heart of the celery if you can) and one medium onion, peeled and quartered. Vidalia is my FAVE! Peel and crush one clove of garlic (no need to chop) and throw that in for good measure. 😊

Add to the stock:

2 tsp each:

Olive oil
Dill
Cumin
Parsley
Himalayan salt or Sea salt (more to suit your taste)
Pepper

Bring to boil then let simmer for 45 min- 1 hour.

*If you will use for soup immediately, you can chop the cabbage, celery and onion to bite size pieces, otherwise you can boil in larger pieces (quarter the cabbage, the onion and cut celery stalks into halves). If you are using this for soup stock, pour the liquid into small containers and freeze.

Creating your soup:

Use the soup stock as a base. You can add meat of your choice, beans such as white northern or pinto, and additional vegetables as you choose.

My favorite way to serve this broth is to place fresh organic raw spinach into the soup bowl and pour the hot soup stock over the spinach. Add additional chopped green onions and Asian basil on top.

Enjoy!

Sending Light,

DeeAnna

Email: deeannamn@gmail.com **Phone:** [706.506.9151](tel:706.506.9151)

<https://deeannamerznagel.com>



This information is not a substitute for medical advice. Please confirm with your physician before making any changes to your food lifestyle. Visit [Terms of Use](#) of more information.