

### Anti-Inflammatory Diet

For allergies, joint pain, heart disease prevention, and fibromyalgia

The bulk of the diet should be fresh organic fruits and vegetables. The more color the better. Berries, plums, peaches, oranges, red and purple grapes, cherries, kale, spinach, peppers and peas, etc. Paler colored foods are OK but not as desirable. Melons, celery, cucumbers, white grapes, bananas and pineapple contain more water and sugar and less anti-inflammatory nutrients but are better than processed snack foods like chips or cookies.

Red meat should be limited to one or two meals per week. Fish should be eaten at least twice per week. Tuna counts as fish. Nuts are a good protein source as long as there are no allergies. Walnuts and almonds are the best but peanuts, cashews and pecans are OK occasionally. Ideally nuts should be eaten raw to retain the healthy oils. Beans are an excellent protein and fiber source but must be well cooked and eaten in moderation. Even people eating two servings of fish per week may benefit from taking supplemental fish oil capsules. Three to six capsules per day generally will produce a beneficial response.

Eat no more than your body can properly digest at each meal. Food that passes into the lower bowel undigested can cause an increased growth of micro-organisms in bowel that produce inflammation inducing toxins. An easy rule of thumb is that the effective digestive capacity of the stomach is about the amount of food that you can hold in two hands cupped together. Avoid eating fruit with meals because it digests at a different rate than other foods and can cause digestive problems and inflammation in the gut. Eat fruit at least a half-hour before a meal or at least two hours after.

Drink six to eight glasses of pure water per day. Avoid excess fruit juice because of the high sugar content. Avoid carbonated beverages.

Some people have allergies or sensitivities to a particular food or food group that cause chronic inflammation.

Sugar is known to increase joint and muscle pain in certain individuals.

Wheat products are a common problem so it is best to start by avoiding any wheat products for a week to see if there is any improvement. Some people may need to limit corn as it is a common allergen too.

Chocolate sometimes causes joint pain that can be confused with rheumatoid arthritis. Sugar will respond similarly for some people.

The nightshade vegetable family can cause severe joint pain and swelling in susceptible individuals. Nightshade vegetables include potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and paprika.

Some people are allergic to foods containing latex. Bananas, kiwi, avocado, chestnuts and papaya contain relatively high levels of latex.

Start with one of these food groups and try to go a week without eating anything from that group to see if symptoms decrease. If symptoms do decrease then you can test it by gorging on these foods for three days to see if the symptoms return. Then try the next food group on the list.