

Anti-Inflammatory Diet Food List

Foods to Include

Fruits and Vegetables

Stock up on a variety of colorful fruits and veggies, as they are packed with antioxidants, which help protect your body against inflammation. Go for berries, cherries, oranges, bell peppers, tomatoes, leafy greens like spinach and kale, and other antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables.

Whole Grains

Whole grains are excellent sources of fiber, which has been shown to reduce levels of C-reactive protein, a marker of inflammation in the body. Opt for foods like brown rice, oatmeal, whole grain bread, quinoa, and bulgur.

Proteins

It is important to opt for lean proteins such as fish, particularly those high in Omega-3 fatty acids like salmon and mackerel, which have been proven to reduce inflammation. Other sources include lean poultry, tofu, tempeh, beans, lentils, and eggs.

Healthy Fats

Not all fats are bad. Some fats, especially Omega-3 fatty acids, are known for their anti-inflammatory effects. Foods rich in these healthy fats include avocados, nuts and seeds (like almonds and chia seeds), and olive oil.

Herbs and Spices

Many herbs and spices are packed with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compounds. Turmeric, with its active ingredient curcumin, has potent anti-inflammatory properties. Ginger and cinnamon are also known for relieving inflammation.

Teas and Hydrating Beverages

Hydration is crucial. Apart from drinking ample amounts of water, go for rejuvenating teas like green tea, chamomile tea, or herbal infusions. They're rich in antioxidants and provide anti-inflammatory benefits.

Implementing these foods into your diet can make a significant difference to your body's inflammation levels. However, it's equally important to know which foods are likely to trigger inflammation, so let's look at those next.

Foods to Avoid

Refined Carbohydrates

White bread, white pasta, and many cereals are refined carbohydrates. These have most of their fiber removed and can cause a rise in blood sugar levels, leading to inflammation.

Sugar and High-Fructose Corn Syrup

Excessive sugar intake can trigger the release of inflammatory messengers called cytokines. Steer clear of sodas, candies, and even certain types of fruit juices due to their high sugar content.

Fried and Processed Foods

Fast foods and others that are fried, greasy, or heavily processed are known to stimulate inflammation. This includes items like French fries, savory snacks, instant noodles, and processed meats.

Red and Processed Meat

Consuming high amounts of red meat (such as beef, pork, and lamb) and processed meat (like hot dogs, sausage, and bacon) can contribute to inflammation.

Trans Fats

Often found in fried foods, pastries, cookies, and donuts, trans fats are notorious inducers of inflammation. They are sometimes listed on food labels as “partially hydrogenated oils,” so be sure to avoid them.

Excessive Alcohol

While moderate amounts of alcohol may reduce inflammation, excessive intake does the exact opposite, promoting inflammation.

Certain Cooking Oils

Some vegetable and seed oils are high in omega-6 fatty acids, which, in excess, can promote inflammation. They include sunflower, corn, safflower, and soybean oils.

Reducing or eliminating these pro-inflammatory foods from your diet can dramatically decrease inflammation and start to tip the scale toward optimal health.