

The Anti-Inflammatory Diet

FOOD PANTRY TIP SHEET

Inflammation is the body's natural way to heal and protect itself in response to injury or exposure to harmful substances. This is helpful when, for an example, your skin is healing from a cut. However, inflammation can be harmful when it is ongoing or chronic.

Chronic inflammation can cause damage to the body's healthy cells and may contribute to diseases and conditions of immune deficiency, such as rheumatoid arthritis and skin infection as well as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and Alzheimer's disease.

Some foods may reduce inflammation, but it's unclear how often and how much is needed for this benefit. Current research advocates an overall balanced diet to supply the body with good nutrition and to help boost the immune system and reduce inflammatory stress.



Foods to Consume to Maintain a Balanced Diet

- » Fit in **more colorful fruits and vegetables**: especially berries, cherries, and leafy greens.
- » Replace refined grains with **more whole grain options** such as brown rice, black rice, wild rice, oats, barley, and whole-wheat bread.
- » Eat **more plant-based proteins**: beans and lentils as well as nuts, seeds and soy products, such as tofu and soy milk.
- » Don't forget your **heart-healthy fats** from avocados, nuts, seeds, some vegetable oils, fish, and shellfish.

What to Watch For on Labels and Ingredient Lists

- » Opt for fresh fruit or fruits packed in **100% juice**.
- » Choose **vegetables with no added salt** (fresh, frozen, or canned).
- » Choose **canned and frozen goods with no salt added** (or low-sodium).
- » **Canned fish** (tuna or salmon).
- » Limit highly processed foods made with **hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils** (can be found in snack crackers and chips).
- » Limit **added sugars** (can be found in fruits packed in syrup, sugary cereals, sweet breakfast foods, baked goods).