



ON TRACK WITH BARIX

Support to Keep You On Track With a Healthful Lifestyle

Check Inflammation

How to Stay Strong with an Anti-Inflammatory Lifestyle

Acute inflammation is the body's protective reaction to infection or injury. As the injury heals or the body fights off the foreign invader, inflammation diminishes and the body turns off its defensive mode — all good for protecting the body.

Inflammation, unfortunately, isn't always perfectly exact. Sometimes the body produces inflammatory chemicals that are not needed. Sometimes there is an over-kill response to an invader and excess inflammatory chemicals are released by the body. This can result in chronic inflammation; a long-term protective response in which the body acts like it is under constant attack. Chronic inflammation is a healthy response gone awry and is actually harmful to the body and at the root of many diseases —arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and obesity, just to name a few.

The good news is that lifestyle choices may help. A healthy weight, a good diet, regular exercise, adequate sleep and managed stress may all keep chronic inflammation

in check and decrease the risk for disease.

Science is not conclusive, often leaving us with more questions than answers, but interestingly, many of the recommendations for lowering chronic inflammation go right along with conventional wisdom for good overall health. Keep in mind that an anti-inflammatory lifestyle will take longer to work than an anti-inflammatory drug—rather than an hour, don't expect any results for a few weeks. Since it appears that a lifestyle that purportedly lowers chronic inflammation won't cause harm and may just do some good, let's learn more.

CHECK ONE: Food Choices

Foods have been identified and categorized by their ability to increase or decrease chronic inflammation. Some of the anti-inflammatory foods work in a similar manner to anti-inflammatory medications—just in a more subtle way. Rather than including a specific food or two in the diet, it may be more beneficial to look at an overall eating plan to lower chronic inflammation. A Mediterranean-style diet has been cited as a good model. Other food strategies that you may want to consider are included at right—keep in mind that some of these recommendations are more weighted in scientific evidence than others:

MORE	LESS
Increase intake of vegetables.	Limit high-fat dairy products (some advocate elimination of all dairy products, especially if lactose intolerant).
Increase intake of fresh fruits, especially berries.	Minimize saturated fats and trans fats (butter, margarines, peanut oil).
Include small portions of almonds, walnuts, pistachios, flaxseed, and other nuts and seeds in your diet.	Minimize refined carbohydrate intake; sweets, pasta, white rice.
Choose whole grain products, brown rice, bulgur wheat.	Cut back on high-fat meats (beef, veal, pork, lamb, duck, goose, sausages, hamburger, hot dogs).
Eat fatty fish 2-3 times a week (salmon, mackerel, herring, sardines, anchovies, rainbow trout, Pacific oysters). If you don't like fish, consider an omega-3 supplement.	Avoid fried foods.
Drink more green tea and water.	Avoid foods cooked at high temperatures (charbroiled, grilled, pan fried).
Choose healthy oils (extra virgin olive oil and flaxseed oil).	Limit processed foods—you know, the ones that don't resemble anything found in nature.
Add spices (ginger, curry, cinnamon, turmeric, saffron, garlic).	
Increase your intake of lentils and beans.	
Choose foods in their closest to nature form (least processed).	

CHECK TWO: A Healthy Weight

Even more important than the foods you choose to eat, maintaining a healthy weight may be your best defense against chronic inflammation. Fat cells themselves increase inflammation in the body. The links between obesity and osteoarthritis, diabetes, heart disease and metabolic syndrome are very close. The heavier the person, the higher are the inflammatory markers and the greater the risk of contracting these diseases.

CHECK THREE: Consistent Exercise

Regular, moderate exercise helps to moderate acute inflammatory responses, allowing for faster healing. Exercise has also been found to decrease chronic inflammation. The more physically fit a person is, the fewer inflammatory chemicals his body produces. So not only do regular exercisers heal faster when injured, they also have less risk for chronic diseases, and their bodies maintain better function. Talk about improving quality of life!



CHECK FOUR: Adequate Sleep

People who do not sleep long enough or who have a poor quality of sleep have higher levels of inflammation. The magic number seems to be 6–9 hours nightly. Those getting less or more have higher levels of inflammation. And it is not just the quantity, but the quality of sleep that counts—another indicator that a good night's sleep is essential for good health.

CHECK FIVE: Manage Stress

Our reaction to stressful situations can include the production of inflammatory chemicals. Studies support this additional source of chronic inflammation. Consider meditation, relaxation techniques, cognitive therapy, exercise, and other stress management techniques as part of your overall plan to reduce inflammation.

Checking chronic inflammation with diet, exercise and lifestyle modifications makes sense. The advice is really not new. Maybe understanding the inflammation connection to good health will inspire better habits. It really all boils down to that, doesn't it? Live well to be well.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Most American diets contain too many omega-6 fatty acids and not nearly enough omega-3 fatty acids for optimal health. The American Heart Association recommends:



- 25–35% of your total calories come from fat.
- Less than 7% of total calories come from saturated fat.
- Less than 1% of total calories come from trans fat.
- Adequate consumption of omega 3 fatty acids based upon your heart disease risk.
- Those without documented heart disease eat a variety of fish, preferably oily fish (salmon, tuna, mackerel, herring and trout) at least twice a week.
- People with documented heart disease consume about one gram of EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acids) per day, preferably from oily fish, although supplements could be considered in consultation with a physician.
- People who have elevated triglycerides obtain two to four grams of EPA and DHA per day in capsule form under a physician's care.

To Translate this into Food Choices:

- Decrease the amount of saturated fat consumed. Saturated fats are found in animal sources, baked goods, foods fried in saturated oils, and some plant products (palm oil, coconut oil). Look for margarines with liquid vegetable oil as the first ingredient and for those labeled as "trans-fat free."
- Read nutrition labels and minimize the intake of trans fats.
- Increase the number of servings of oily fish consumed (salmon, tuna, mackerel, herring and trout) each week to two or more. The FDA advisory says that up to 12 oz of a variety of fish is safe for everyone. You can also obtain omega-3 fatty acids from canola, safflower, olive and corn oils; flaxseed; soybeans; walnuts; pecans; broccoli and other green leafy vegetables. These plant foods are rich in alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), an omega-3 fatty acid.
- Choose lean meats and poultry, low-fat dairy products, and egg whites to moderate omega-6 fatty acids from animal sources. High amounts of omega-6 fatty acids cause inflammation and promote cancer.
- Remember that fish oil capsules are not the best way to increase your intake of omega-3 fatty acids. Foods contain a balance of nutrients, providing a synergistic effect, and the omega-3 fatty acids are better absorbed from food than from supplements. Supplements may contain concentrated amounts of toxins found in fresh fish. Overdo it and you run the risk of body odor, bleeding and bruising; not likely if you get your omega-3s from foods. Those with high triglyceride levels may be advised to take supplements while under the care of a physician.

Recipes

Salmon | A rich source of Omega 3

Simple Baked Salmon

2 salmon filets (approx. 1/2 lb each)
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Put salmon filets in a glass baking dish. Drizzle olive oil over the filets and flip them over a couple of times, to spread the oil and get a little oil on the bottom of the baking dish and the underside of the filets.

Bake at 350 degrees for 15–30 minutes. The filets should be opaque inside, easy to flake with a fork, but not dry—do not overcook. Makes 4 small servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 295 calories, 25 grams protein, 20 grams fat, 0 carbohydrates, 69 mg sodium.

Creamy Dill Sauce

1/2 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt
2 scallions, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh dill or parsley
Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Combine all ingredients in a small bowl and mix well. Makes 8 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 8 calories, 1 gram protein, 0 grams fat, 1 gram carbohydrate, 6 mg sodium.



Salmon Cakes

3 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 stalk celery, finely diced
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
15 ounces canned salmon, drained, or 1 1/2 cups cooked salmon
2 egg whites, lightly beaten
1 1/2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 3/4 cups fresh whole-wheat breadcrumbs
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 lemon, cut into wedges

Preheat oven to 450°F. Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray. Heat 1 1/2 teaspoons oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Saute celery and onion until softened. Stir in parsley and remove from heat.

In a medium bowl, flake salmon with a fork, removing any bones and skin. Add egg white and mustard, mix. Mix in sauteed celery and onion, breadcrumbs and pepper. Shape into 8 patties.

Heat remaining 1-1/2 teaspoons oil in the pan over medium heat. Add 4 patties and cook until the bottom sides are golden, 2 to 3 minutes. Using a wide spatula, turn them over onto the prepared baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining patties.

Bake in preheated oven until golden on top and heated through, 15 to 20 minutes. Serve salmon cakes with dill sauce and lemon wedges. Makes 8 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 323 calories, 31 grams protein, 9 grams fat, 589 mg sodium.



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What you have to say may be printed in this publication or on our website and can serve as inspiration to all.

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It Worked for Me

Advice from the Barix Forums

A recent post asked for help to get back on track with behaviors that support a healthy weight. Although this person was successful with weight loss, she recognized that she was not taking vitamins, not making good food choices and not exercising. She received several supportive responses to her post, summed up here.

- *Focus on the good things (weight loss, new clothing, etc) to keep motivated.*
- *Use the tool of weight loss surgery – you have not been given a “get out of jail free” card.*
- *Find activities that you enjoy.*
- *Take your vitamins daily.*
- *Go back to the basics—protein first, sip fluids, avoid sugars, etc.*
- *Stay strong. Congratulations for reaching out on the forums.*
- *Plan ahead and prepare foods in advance.*
- *Track your intake and activity.*



Log on and check out our new social networking site: forum.barixclinics.com.

You'll find extended profiles, blogs, forums, and chat features where you can connect and communicate better than ever in a community designed specifically for you, a Barix patient!

Social media is not a media. The key is to listen, engage, and build relationships.

David Alston



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