

The Most Potent, Anti-Inflammatory Everyday Foods

According to Medical News Today, nearly 75% of all deaths in the United States are attributed to just ten causes. Eight of the ten, which include heart disease, cancer, chronic lower respiratory disease, stroke, Alzheimer's, diabetes, kidney disease, and even suicide, are directly linked to chronic inflammation.

In fact, by simply lowering the levels of inflammation in the body we can prevent, slow the progression of, and, in some cases, reverse each of those eight causes of death. This would leave us with influenza and accidents at the top of the list, but the severity and likelihood of influenza would be reduced with an anti-inflammatory diet.

This means that if we all adopt an anti-inflammatory lifestyle, the only thing that can get in our way of living a fulfilling and healthy life is an accident or the inevitable aging. But even the effects of aging are caused by low-grade inflammation. In many scientific papers, this process is called "inflammaging" and it is the reason why your brain and body just don't function like they used to as you age. But this process too can be slowed down tremendously by adopting an anti-inflammatory lifestyle.

What is an Anti-Inflammatory Lifestyle?

Let's keep it simple. To maintain lower levels of inflammation we need to move more, sleep better, and eat right by eating anti-inflammatory foods instead of inflammatory foods.

So let's start with the food we should eat because just eating

the right food will make it easier to eat less, move more, sleep better, and stress less.

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Anti-Inflammatory Foods

When you replace inflammatory foods with fruits, vegetables, herbs, and other anti-inflammatory foods you will decrease the levels of inflammation in your body, which will lead to a reduction in cravings and the amount of food you eat, an increase in your energy levels and sleep quality, and a decrease in stress and anxiety.

A food is anti-inflammatory when it contains vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other beneficial compounds that act together with our body to promote the health of our cells. Think whole foods. Although you are safe in assuming that any organic fruit, vegetable, herb, nut, or seed comes with their own anti-inflammatory effects (as long as you are not allergic and they aren't fried, overcooked, or otherwise processed), there are some foods and beverages that, without a doubt, have potent anti-inflammatory effects that help boost cellular health, reduce aging, and reverse disease.

The 11 Most Effective Anti-Inflammatory Foods and Beverages

Sesame seeds, Flaxseeds, and Chia Seeds



Consuming seed oils on their own is strongly advised against, but when they are eaten freshly ground, seeds are filled with anti-inflammatory and health promoting compounds. For example, sesame seeds, flaxseeds, and chia seeds all have a high lignan content, which has protective effects against inflammation, carcinogens, and cancer.

Flaxseeds are the richest dietary source of lignan precursors, while sesame seeds offer the highest amount of phytosterols of all nuts and seeds. Phytosterols are important because they decrease blood cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of developing certain types of cancer. They may also be what makes sesame seeds a potential treatment for the symptoms of osteoarthritis.

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Chia seeds contain more ALA, or Alpha-linoleic acid, than any other seed. ALA is most widely known as a plant source of EPA and DHA for the body, but only a small percentage of it is actually converted to EPA and DHA. However, ALA still may help reduce inflammation in the colon making it a potential treatment for colitis.

It is best to consume sesame seeds, flaxseeds, and chia seeds ground or crushed right before consumption. Use them in dressings, dipping sauces, salads, or smoothies.

Soaked chia seeds can also be used as an egg replacement in baking recipes. However, it is important to avoid roasted seeds because they will contain rancid oils that make them pro-inflammatory.

Hibiscus Tea



Green tea is widely known as a healthy beverage, especially matcha green tea, which has more antioxidants than normal green tea. However, matcha green tea comes with around 70 mg of caffeine per cup. Although the caffeine content is lower than a cup of coffee, it is still high enough to affect the mind and body. Doses of caffeine as low as 12.5 mg can create a powerful response in the body, so if you

would rather not expose yourself to the increased stress response and addictive qualities that caffeine provides, hibiscus is the best option.

Hibiscus tea is actually a better option for reducing inflammation than any other tea because it elicits much more antioxidant and anti-inflammation activity in the body, and it has no caffeine at all.

Hibiscus tea also tastes better than green tea (in my opinion). I prefer to cold brew it overnight with a little bit of lemon juice to make a refreshing drink I can sip throughout the day.

Berries



There are hundreds of types of berries in the world and all of them contain different anthocyanins, which are flavonoids responsible for their distinctive colors of red, blue, and purple. These flavonoids also have powerful anti-inflammatory effects.

Wild blueberries, for example, have been found to improve memory in older adults, which suggests that they protect the brain from inflammation. Other berries like cranberries, elderberries, currants, acai berry, goji berries, and amla fruit have different flavonoids that have potent anti-inflammatory effects on other parts of the body as well.

Amla fruit, in particular, may have the most potent anti-inflammatory benefits of all the berries, with more antioxidant activity than blueberries, 20 times more vitamin C than lemon juice, 30 times more polyphenols than red wine, and more gallic acid (a potent antioxidant) than any other fruit.

Citrus Fruits



Citrus fruits, like lemons, limes, oranges, and grapefruit, contain flavonoids that have anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer effects on damaged cells. Studies have found that citrus fruits have little to no effect on healthy cells so, even in high doses, citrus flavonoids are non-toxic.

Virgin Olive Oil

Virgin olive oil contains numerous health promoting compounds. One of the most studied compounds found in virgin olive oil is a phenolic compound called oleocanthal.



Oleocanthal possesses similar anti-inflammatory properties to ibuprofen. This makes virgin olive oil a great addition to the diet to help reduce acute and chronic inflammation.

However, some of the fats in olive oil can become rancid at temperatures higher than 300 degrees Fahrenheit so it is important to consume it in its uncooked form. Put it on your salads and vegetables to add some healthy fats your meal and increase the absorption of vitamins A and K from the vegetables, while you reap the benefits of olive oil's healing

properties.

Turmeric



Most of us have probably heard about the healing properties of turmeric, and the rumors are true. Even Dr. Axe refers to it as the “most powerful herb on the planet at fighting and potentially reversing disease”.

This is because turmeric contains curcumin, a phenolic compound that is responsible for turmeric’s yellow color, and its ability to help heal cells throughout the body. So far we have found curcumin to be a potential treatment for Alzheimer’s, heart disease, autoimmune diseases, gastrointestinal diseases, and cancer.

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Cloves

This spice is commonly used in pumpkin pie to give it that extra cinnamon-like kick, but you may not know that cloves have the highest antioxidant content of any spice or herb that scientists have measured.

Cloves protect the body by eradicating harmful bacteria, fungi, and yeast, including giardia and candida. Insulin resistance and obesity may be



ameliorated by cloves as well.

I prefer to consume cloves in the form of tea to help relieve a sore throat and improve my energy levels. You can also add it to smoothies, hot beverages, sauces, and soups to give them some extra flavor.

Garlic (and other vegetables from the Allium family)



Garlic has been used for centuries as a prophylactic and a treatment for many diseases. It is rich in organosulfur compounds, which give it its potent flavor, taste, and healing abilities. In fact, garlic has been found to reduce the size of tumors and activate important anti-oxidant enzymes in the body that help protect our cells from cancer, infection, and disease.

Garlic, onions, leeks, and other vegetables from the Allium family all contain allicin. This is an active compound that activates anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidative activities that protect us from disease, and it may even have neuroprotective effects against brain injury.

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Broccoli Sprouts (and other cruciferous vegetables)



Many cruciferous vegetables are filled with vitamins K and A, which are essential for our health, but have you heard of sulforaphane? This is a compound that is created when we crush or chew cruciferous vegetables, and broccoli sprouts add more of this compound to our diet than any other cruciferous vegetable.

Why does it matter? Because sulforaphane has anti-cancer and anti-inflammatory properties, which boost brain function and even protect us from the flu and environmental pollutants.

You can easily grow your own broccoli sprouts at home. If you start today, they will be ready to eat in less than a week. You can add your fresh sprouts to salads and smoothies or have them as a snack.

Coconut Oil



There is a lot of controversy surrounding saturated fats, but the truth is that they aren't the problem that we once thought

they were. The perfect example of how saturated fats can be good for you is found when we consume coconut oil.

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In a randomized, double-blind, clinical trial, coconut oil supplementation promoted a reduction in abdominal fat and kept blood lipids under control, while soybean oil caused an increase in total cholesterol and a decrease in HDL cholesterol. This is most likely due to a reduction in inflammation caused by consuming coconut oil and an increase in inflammation caused by consuming soybean oil.

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Avocado

Avocados are primarily made up of monounsaturated fatty acids – a type of fat that reverses inflammation. It may even reverse the inflammation caused by some types of saturated fats. This is because monounsaturated fatty acids activate anti-inflammatory processes in the body while being extremely stable. On the other hand, fats like omega 6s and omega 3s are highly unstable, which is why they can create harmful oxidants and increase inflammation in the body. Monounsaturated fats, however, are so stable that they only improve our health.



In fact, Monounsaturated fat is so stable that it can be heated to around 500 degrees Fahrenheit without becoming rancid, which makes it a great cooking oil.

But it's not just all about the fat. Avocados also contain

other compounds like mannoheptulose, which may help reverse obesity and diabetes.

Putting It All Together

You can literally combine each one of these anti-inflammatory foods into a delicious meal. Get your notepad ready.

Step 1

Get your cruciferous greens and put them in a bowl. They will be the base of your meal.

Step 2

Put some avocado slices, broccoli sprouts, and wild blueberries on top.

Step 3

In a small bowl, combine virgin olive oil with crushed garlic, lemon juice, chopped up turmeric slices, and apple cider vinegar.

Step 4

Grind some chia seeds, flaxseeds, or sesame seeds and put them on top of your salad. Finish it off with your olive oil based dressing.

Step 5

While you enjoy your anti-inflammatory meal, start brewing some ground clove and hibiscus tea. To give it a creamy and frothy feel, put about a tablespoon of coconut oil and blend it up when it's finished brewing.

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But What about Omega 3s!?



After digging through the research, it's hard to justify putting seafood on the list of anti-inflammatory foods. It is commonly believed that the omega 3s called DHA and EPA that are found in seafood help prevent heart disease and inflammation,

but studies on omega 3 supplementation have not consistently shown this effect. The association between eating fish and a reduction in heart disease risk is better explained by the fact that people who eat more fish tend to have healthier lifestyles.

It is important to mention that even though they are not on this list, seafood and other animal products contain many different antioxidants, vitamins, and amino acids that are essential for maintaining health. But even high-quality meat and fish may still cause a small inflammatory response, which is why they didn't make our list of anti-inflammatory foods.

Conclusion

This is by no means a comprehensive list of foods that fight inflammation. This article just contains the most well-researched anti-inflammatory foods that have been studied so far (that I could find).

The truth is that there are thousands upon thousands of different compounds in plants that influence our bodies, and we have only studied the effects of a small fraction of them.

The most important thing you can do after reading this article

is to eat a wide variety of whole vegetables, fruits, herbs, nuts, and seeds to ensure that you are nourished. If you do this and ignore all the foods listed above you will still decrease your inflammation levels. This is because you are eating less inflammatory foods and eating more fiber, which feeds the probiotics in your gut that help protect your gut lining and produce anti-inflammatory by-products.

But if you continue eating inflammatory foods every day, they will undermine all the positive effects you can get from eating anti-inflammatory foods.

For more on what an inflammatory food is and how they cause inflammation, see *Chronic Inflammation: How You Are Causing It and How You To Be Rid Of It* and *What Causes Chronic Inflammation, and How To Stop It For Good*.

Related:

- *What Causes Chronic Inflammation, and How To Stop It For Good*
- *Heal Cavities, Gum Disease, Naturally with Organic Oral Care – Toothpaste Recipes Included*
- *Holistic Guide to Healing the Endocrine System and Balancing Our Hormones*
- *Healing Allergy Inflammation With Stinging Nettle*
- *Naturally Treat Multiple Sclerosis – Therapies, Diet, Pain Management, Alternative Medicine*

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