

FIGHTING INFLAMMATION WITH YOUR DIET - RESTORE MEDICAL PARTNERS

By Jordan Churchill, Director of Operations

Studies have shown that patients who follow a strict vegan or Mediterranean diet experience improvements in pain symptoms. Regular exercise, controlling stress levels, and eating healthy foods all work in unison to reduce inflammation, a primary cause of chronic pain. Inflammation is the body's immune response to toxins and injuries; a biochemical coagulation reaction that signals to the body that repair is needed. While this inflammatory process is critical to healing, the inflammation itself causes pain, and over time it can trigger chronic diseases such as heart disease, strokes, diabetes, and even depression.

Maintaining healthy cholesterol and insulin levels can keep inflammation at bay, which is especially important as patients age, where natural arthritic degeneration can cause inflammation more regularly. Fibromyalgia, a constant source of frustration for millions of patients nationwide, has also been shown to be eased with a proper anti-inflammatory diet.

While targeted interventional care is sometimes needed, one of the most exciting and easy-to-accomplish approaches to pain management is in your diet. A natural, anti-inflammatory diet helps speed along recovery from injuries and other pain conditions, and is a necessary factor in a well-rounded approach to chronic pain.

Here are three basics to fighting inflammation with your diet;

1. Eat your veggies! 8-9 Servings of vegetables each day. You can alternate several of these servings with fruit instead. Cruciferous vegetables such as Brussels Sprouts, cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower are particularly helpful in reducing inflammation.

2. Restrict the grains. Dairy, simple carbohydrates, flour, and sugar are particularly bad choices for those in chronic pain as they tend to cause inflammation. When consuming grains, choose whole grains like barley, oats, quinoa, and brown rice over other options, and limit your intake. Olive oil and nuts are also effective inflammation fighters.

3. Avoid red meat: Now I know this one may not be all that popular, but red meat can be a significant trigger for inflammation. Replacing red meat with fish or choosing vegetarian options is always a wise decision. Alternating some red meats with chicken can also help. While chicken isn't necessarily beneficial, it's not a trigger of inflammation the way red meat is.

Maintaining a healthy weight, the side effect of good diet and exercise, is the best way to fight arthritis and inflammation. Get a simple exercise routine going, even if it's only a 30 minute walk 2-3 days a week. That kind of activity can ward off pain and increase overall health and wellbeing. It can also be a time to decompress and de-stress, another major factor in keeping pain levels down.

A balanced diet can help keep inflammation and pain at bay, and is an essential part of an effective pain management strategy. For a customized plan for your pain and your diet, call Restore Medical Partners today.

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