



Anti-Inflammatory Dietary Guidelines

FOODS TO INCLUDE

VEGETABLES

Vegetables contain fibers and important phytonutrients which help keep inflammation in check and fight cancer. Include generous amounts of raw and cooked vegetables in your diet.

Note: Nightshade plants (i.e., potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant) contain an alkaloid called solanine which can trigger inflammation in some people.

FRUITS

Fruits contain important phytonutrients which help your body detoxify, keep inflammation in check, and fight cancer. Even though fruits are sweet, they contain fibers which modulate sugar uptake and therefore do not pose the same concern as eating refined sugar. Use fresh or frozen fruits; avoid canned fruits. Small amounts of dried berries may also be used. Fruit juice is high in sugar and lacking fiber and should therefore be limited unless specifically prescribed. **Hint:** If you need to gain weight, eat fruits often throughout the day, and include higher calorie fruits such as banana and avocado.

BROWN RICE

Brown rice is a good source of vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber. It is a valuable gluten free grain which contains important phytonutrients such as lignans which are converted into cancer protective substances by the friendly flora in our intestines. Brown rice also has the beneficial effect of decreasing insulinic reactivity. Eating brown rice helps avoid constipation, unlike white rice which may cause constipation. **Brown rice is considered the staple grain for most diets.** **Hint:** Use a rice cooker with extra water (i.e., 3 cups brown rice to 7 cups water) for easy preparation and soft, palatable rice.

OTHER GLUTEN FREE GRAINS & GRAIN SUBSTITUTES

Amaranth, arrowroot, artichoke, black rice, buckwheat, chestnut, chickpea, corn (cooked whole corn, corn on the cob, and tortillas - not refined breakfast cereals such as corn flakes which lack nutrients and have a high glycemic index), oats, red rice, sesame, sweet potato, quinoa, tapioca (high glycemic, use in small amounts only), taro, wild rice.

LEGUMES

Legumes are an excellent source of protein, fiber, vitamins, minerals and valuable phytonutrients. When combined with grains, they form a complete protein. **Note:** Soy has estrogenic and anti-thyroid properties which makes it unsuitable for some patients. **Hint:** Soaking beans overnight in cool water before cooking will reduce the gas causing oligosaccharides (discard the soaking water before cooking). You can also use a digestive enzyme such as “Beano” to help with gas.

NUTS AND SEEDS

Nuts and seeds contain beneficial fatty acids, vitamin E and fiber. Flax seeds, pumpkin seeds and walnuts are rich in anti-inflammatory Omega 3 fatty acids. Include 2-3 tablespoons per day of nuts and seeds (raw, unsalted when possible) in your diet unless you are allergic to them. Natural nut butters such as almond and peanut can also be included in moderation unless you are allergic (avoid nut butters which contain sugar and/or hydrogenated fats).

FISH

Fish and shellfish are low in saturated fat and contain high quality protein and other essential nutrients. Salmon, sardines, anchovies, flounder, sablefish, halibut, cod, pollock, shrimp and oysters have been shown to generally contain low levels of mercury. Salmon, sardines, and anchovies are also rich in anti-inflammatory Omega 3 fatty acids. Unless you are allergic, include 2-3 servings of safe fish per week. Alternatively, fish oil supplements that are tested for safety can be used. Shark, swordfish, king mackerel, tilefish, and large tuna contain the highest levels of mercury and should therefore be limited unless you have access to a supplier that tests their product for safety.

LEMON WATER

Consuming the juice of a lemon added to drinking water each day helps alkalinize your system, supports a healthy immune system, cleanses and detoxifies while supplying valuable nutrients such as vitamin C and bioflavonoids.

COCONUT MILK

Coconut milk is the ideal replacement for dairy products in the diet. It contains medium chain triglycerides (MCTs) which are easily digested and converted into energy with a minimal strain on the liver, pancreas and digestive system. MCTs are also anti-inflammatory and important in maintaining a healthy immune system. Coconut milk can be used plain, mixed with rice milk, used to make fruit smoothies and included in recipes as a replacement for milk, cream and other dairy products. Unsweetened coconut meat and coconut oil can also be included in the diet.

BEVERAGES

Fluid intake should average a minimum of 2 Liters per day. Include purified water, lemon water, your prescription herbal tea (if applicable), rice/coconut milk (see above), soups and broths. Fruits and vegetables also have a high water content and therefore contribute to proper hydration. If you like to drink herbal teas, rotate different kinds to reduce the possibility of the herbs interfering with your treatment plan. Limit fruit juices unless they are prescribed. Coffee, soft drinks, and alcoholic beverages should be strictly limited.

FOODS TO LIMIT OR AVOID

MEATS, EGGS

The digestion of animal proteins creates acid and other potentially toxic and inflammatory by-products. Fish and poultry (white meat) pose a lesser concern than red meats. Cold water fish such as salmon contains beneficial anti-inflammatory Omega-3 fatty acids. Include fish and lean poultry in your diet in moderation (no more than 2 servings per day). One serving of meat = 3 oz (i.e., 3/4 Cup flaked fish or 1/2 of an average size skinless chicken breast). Limit eggs to one serving every other day. Avoid red meats (beef and pork) completely. **Note:** Contrary to current advertising campaigns, pork is NOT a white meat.

DAIRY PRODUCTS

Dairy products contain proteins which can unleash the production of immunoglobulins and provoke an inflammatory reaction. Dairy products also indirectly stimulate growth factors and commonly contain estrogenic chemicals and antibiotic residues. Limit cow's milk, goat's milk and all products such as cheese which are made from them. **Hint:** Many non-hydrogenated butter substitutes are now available.

WHEAT AND OTHER GLUTEN CONTAINING GRAINS

Like dairy products, gluten containing grains such as wheat and barley contain proteins which can unleash the production of immunoglobulins and provoke an inflammatory reaction.

OATS

While oats have many health benefits, they are also mildly estrogenic and may not be tolerated by some patients with celiac disease.

SUGAR

Chronic consumption of simple sugars creates endocrine imbalances which can aggravate inflammation. Strictly restrict or eliminate refined sugar in the diet. Natural whole fruit, however, is normally encouraged rather than restricted in the diet (see "fruits" above). When you feel a sugar craving, try fruit first. Refined carbohydrates such as white flour and white rice pose similar risks and should be strictly limited in the diet. Artificial sweeteners are NOT recommended.

Acceptable sweeteners include:

- Stevia (South American herb 30 times sweeter than sugar in crude form and 300 times sweeter than sugar in its concentrated liquid form)
- Xylitol (natural sugar alcohol) in small amounts
- Honey in small amounts

POTATOES, SWEET POTATOES, YAMS

The starch in potatoes is readily converted into glucose. Therefore it is advisable to limit potato consumption and instead favor brown rice and whole grain pastas. Nightshade plants such as potatoes contain an alkaloid called solanine which can trigger inflammation in some people. Sweet potatoes and yams are not really members of the potato family at all. Yams contain diosgenin, an estrogen precursor which can play a negative role for some patients.

FRIED FOODS

Fried foods are typically high in saturated fat. Frying also causes formation of acrylamide, a potentially inflammatory and cancer causing chemical. Strictly limit fried foods in your diet.

FOOD ADDITIVES

Food additives such as artificial flavors, colors, sweeteners, hydrogenated (trans) fats, and preservatives contain toxic or inflammatory substances, allergens, and/or place a strain on the organs of elimination. Avoid them as diligently as possible.

ALLERGENIC FOODS

Food allergies can play a role in inflammation. Common offenders include cow's milk, wheat, corn, eggs, beef, yeast, soy, fish, shellfish and nuts. Allergy testing or elimination diets that can be used to help identify allergenic foods.

Sample Menu

Breakfast

Bowl of whole grain cereal with fruit such as berries, peaches, pears

If desired, sweeten with a drop of stevia

Use rice milk/coconut milk instead of cow's milk

Prescription herbal tea (if applicable), lemon water, or rice/coconut milk combination to drink

Hint: A pinch of ground cinnamon adds sweetness without extra sugar

Snack

Raw veggies such as carrot, celery sticks, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.

Lunch

Green salad (no iceberg lettuce) topped with salmon, tuna, or chicken if desired

Add as many vegetables as possible (avocado, sprouts, cucumber, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, etc.)

Salad dressing made with olive oil, lemon juice and a pinch of Italian herbs

Serving of brown rice or slice of whole grain bread dipped in olive oil or topped with Smart Balance

OR Veggie sandwich on whole grain bread

Prescription herbal tea (if applicable), lemon water, or rice/coconut milk combination to drink

Snack

Raw fruit such as apple slices, peach, pear, berries, pineapple or fresh fruit smoothie made with rice/coconut milk

Dinner

Vegetarian tacos

Prepare tacos like you normally do but substitute a mixture of seasoned brown rice and beans for hamburger

Use plenty of vegetables on top such as leafy green lettuce, cucumber, olives, tomato, cilantro, pureed fire roasted chiles, etc.

Use whole grain tortillas

OR Thai Curry Rice & vegetables of choice (carrots, green beans, etc.)

Prescription herbal tea (if applicable), lemon water, or rice/coconut milk combination to drink

Snack

Raw fruit or veggies, and slice of whole grain bread if desired

****Please note: Patients with IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease) may need to avoid certain fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes and nuts.***

Sample Recipes

Rice/Coconut Milk

Add 1 can natural coconut milk (Thai Kitchen or other preservative free brand)

To ½ gallon (64 oz) unsweetened rice milk

Store in refrigerator in a mixing pitcher or container you can shake before serving

Use in place of milk on cereals, in fresh fruit smoothies, etc.

Hint: If you are underweight, add 1 can coconut milk to 1 Liter (32 oz) rice milk and drink throughout the day

Healthy Italian Salad Dressing

To a blender or food processor add:

1/4 Cup chopped sweet onion

1 clove garlic

1 teaspoon Italian herb blend

1/4 Cup lemon juice or real apple cider vinegar

1/4 Cup olive or grapeseed oil

1 teaspoon soy sauce or a pinch of sea salt (optional)

Puree and then store in refrigerator for up to 2 weeks

Vegetarian Tacos

Place 4 cups cooked brown rice and a can of black beans in a frying pan

Heat and add taco seasoning

Place on top of whole grain tortilla along with plenty of vegetables such as leafy green lettuce, cucumber, olives, tomato, cilantro, pureed fire roasted chiles, etc.

Hint: A rice cooker is convenient way to cook rice. Add a little extra water to brown rice to make it soft. If you cook your own beans, soak overnight in cool water and then discard the soaking water before preparing to minimize gas.

Easy Thai Curry Rice

Cut a large sweet onion into slices (add 8 oz sliced mushrooms if desired)

Saute with olive oil, grapeseed oil, or Smart Balance

Add:

2 Tablespoons curry powder (reduce if you don't like it spicy)

1 can vegetable broth or chicken broth without MSG

1 can water chestnuts

1 can bamboo shoots

1 can black beans

1 teaspoon soy sauce or a pinch of sea salt (optional)

1 can coconut milk

Bring to a boil and then serve over brown rice

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