

**WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for December 11, 2023**  
**Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.**

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about inflammation, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

One nutrition topic that has become popular the past few years is eating specific foods to prevent inflammation. Inflammation can be a good thing in certain situations. This can mean our immune system is fighting an infection, illness, or an injury. But not all inflammation is helpful, especially if it becomes chronic.

Long-term inflammation can last several months to years. This has been shown to increase the risk of developing heart disease, type 2 diabetes, arthritis, and other chronic inflammatory diseases. There are several risk factors that will sound familiar with other health conditions. These include smoking, alcohol consumption, extreme physical activity, stress, and eating a pro-inflammatory diet.

There are many foods out there with labels indicating they are "anti-inflammatory." But when it comes right down to it, a well-balanced diet that includes variety is probably just as anti-inflammatory as any super marketed product on the shelf. Sally Hepner of Colorado State University says, "It's what you do most of the time that matters the most."

I really love that. I think that too many of us are hoping that we can indulge in foods that are recognized as contributing to inflammation and then eat something else occasionally that will reverse the effects. But we know that is not the way nutrition works.

Here are the foods associated with contributing to chronic inflammation:

- Foods high in saturated fats (including processed red meat and foods made with saturated fats and oils)
- Full-fat dairy (such as cheese and whole milk)
- Refined grains (foods made with white flour, like cakes, cookies, white bread, and pasta)
- Processed sugars (foods made with cane sugar or corn syrup, including candy, cookies, cakes, and pop)

- Processed foods (fast food and packaged convenience foods, like cookies, chips, and microwave dinners)
- Foods that are high in sodium (including many soups and snack foods)

According to Peyton Millard of the University of Nebraska, researchers are still uncovering how the foods we eat may impact the inflammation in our bodies. What we choose to eat may help prevent chronic inflammation and may even help us to manage the inflammation that is present.

Boosting your consumption of whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, olive oil, fruits, and vegetables can help reduce chronic inflammation. Some are even more potent including leafy greens, berries, tea, coffee, and dark chocolate. Omega 3 fatty acids are another powerful anti-inflammatory component that can be found in foods such as seafood and avocados.

University of Nebraska suggests these very practical approaches to help reduce chronic inflammation:

1. Make fruits and vegetables half of your plate. This includes fresh, frozen, canned, and dried. Any form is fine as long as there are no added sugars and lower amounts of sodium.
2. Choose protein wisely. Choose lean proteins like chicken and turkey and lean beef. Select fish like salmon or tuna a couple of times a week. Include low-fat or fat-free dairy products and add in beans and lentils.
3. Choose healthy fats. Consume monounsaturated fats, such as nuts or avocados, and cook with oils like canola or olive oil.

A key is to focus on eating the anti-inflammatory foods more often than the pro-inflammatory foods. There are even more temptations this time of year for high fat, high sugar, high just-about-everything foods. Moderation is the key, and you will feel the difference.

And now let's see what's new from OSU Extension: The next series of ServSafe Manager training will be February 7, 14, and 21 with the proctored exam on February 28. Registration information is available on our website [coshocton.osu.edu](http://coshocton.osu.edu).

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at [coshocton.osu.edu](http://coshocton.osu.edu). Make it a healthy day!