

MINUTE NUTRITION NEWS

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NUTRITION AND INFLAMMATION: WHAT'S THE LINK?

By Lisa Lau, Registered Dietitian at the Georgina Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic

Inflammation and its relationship with chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, cancer, diabetes and arthritis have been increasingly studied in recent years. Everyday, our body faces stress, environmental toxins and even poor nutrition, all of which causes constant and long-term inflammation in our body. This type of inflammation, unlike the swelling you get from a cut on your finger, produces no physical signs and symptoms that you can feel. However, in the long term, it can cause changes in your body leading to the development of chronic disease.



WHAT CAN I EAT TO REDUCE INFLAMMATION?

- **Vegetables and fruits** – This food group contain vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and other plant compounds that have been shown to reduce inflammation. Aim for 8-10 servings of colourful vegetables and fruits each day for maximum nutrition. One serving is ½ cup fruit or cooked vegetable, one medium fruit, or 1 cup raw leafy vegetables.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids** – Omega-3 fatty acids found in fatty fish or fish oil supplements can fight and reduce inflammation. These fatty fish include salmon, anchovies, rainbow trout, arctic char, Atlantic or Pacific mackerel, sardines, smelt and herring. Aim to eat these fish 2-3 times a week. If you do not like fish, speak with your Nurse Practitioner or Registered Dietitian about taking a fish oil supplement.
- **Monounsaturated Fats** – Eating styles high in monounsaturated fats (i.e. the Mediterranean diet) have been linked to lower levels of inflammation. To incorporate a moderate amount of these fats, use extra-virgin olive oil as your main cooking oil, or combine with balsamic vinegar as a salad dressing. Enjoy avocado, nuts, nut butters and seeds as a part of your meals or snacks.
- **Carbohydrates with a Low Glycemic Index (GI)** – Low GI choices that tend to be high-fibre whole grains contain higher levels of nutrients and plant compounds that may help fight inflammation. Look for steel-cut oats, barley, brown or wild rice, quinoa, whole grain bread, and high-fibre, low-sugar breakfast cereals. Sweet potatoes and legumes (such as kidney beans, lentils, chickpeas) are also starchy foods with a low glycemic index.

WHAT PROMOTES INFLAMMATION?

- **Saturated Fats and Trans Fats** – Eating too much saturated and trans fats can have negative effects on cholesterol levels and increase inflammation. Be aware of processed foods and enjoy butter and red meats in moderation.
- **Omega-6 Fatty Acids** – A higher ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fats intake is believed to be linked to inflammation. Although vital to our health, many of us may be consuming too much omega-6 fats through our use of vegetable oils (corn, safflower, soybean, sunflower).
- **Carbohydrates with a High Glycemic Index** – High GI foods tend to be refined grains that have gone through more extensive processing. The processing can strip the grains from the nutrients it naturally contains to help fight inflammation.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

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Spiced Pumpkin Soup

Still wanting more pumpkin recipes even though the last ones have been used up for those jack-o-lanterns? No problem! Try this Spiced Pumpkin Soup using canned pumpkin! This colourful vegetable is packed with nutrients that can help your body fight inflammation!

Serves 2 (1 serving = approximately 1 cup)



Ingredients:

2 tsp	extra virgin olive oil
¼	large onion, chopped
2 cloves	garlic, minced
1 cup	pumpkin puree, canned
1 ½ cup	chicken broth, no salt added
2	small bay leaves
¼ tsp	ground coriander seeds
1/8 tsp	cumin
½ tsp	ginger, minced
¼ tsp	salt
to taste	ground pepper
¼ cup	milk, 2%
1 tbsp	Greek yogurt, plain, 2% (optional)

Directions:

1. Heat oil in a medium-sized pot over medium heat.
2. Once oil is heated, add garlic and onions and cook until onions become soft.
3. Add pumpkin puree, chicken broth, bay leaves, coriander, cumin and ginger. Bring to a boil and then lower to medium heat and simmer for 20 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and add salt and pepper.
5. Use an immersion blender and blend until soup becomes a puree texture.
6. Stir in milk until evenly combined.
7. Serve into bowl, and add Greek yogurt if desired.

Nutrition information (per cup):

130 calories, Fat 6 g (9% DV), Carbohydrate 15 g (5% DV), Fibre 6 g (24%), Protein 5 g, Sodium 360 mg (15% DV), Sugars 8 g, Calcium 80 mg (8% DV), Vitamin C 4 mg (6%), Vitamin A 15,050 IU (300%), Iron 1 mg (6%)