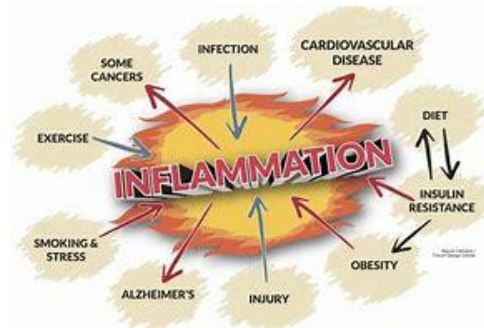




It's a buzzword linked to a wide range of ailments—heart disease, digestive issues, even wrinkles. But not all inflammation is bad!

When you accidentally slice your finger along with your vegetables, your body kicks off an inflammatory process that directs white blood cells to the injury to fight bacteria and start tissue repair. So...good.

On the other hand, when you're chronically stressed, aren't sleeping well, and eat processed foods high in fat and sugar (who, me?), your body has an inflammatory response that is not good. It will produce proteins that will begin to destroy healthy cells in arteries, organs, and joints and can trigger various ailments.

The saying "you are what you eat" is true. Certain foods and lifestyle habits can calm or prevent inflammation. So, what is in an anti-inflammatory diet? I'm sure nothing that I eat, but let's see:

- Dark yellow & orange veggies—carrots, sweet potatoes, and squashes is key in the diet. They help protect healthy cells, and shock, I will eat all of that!
- Coffee & Tea—They both have antioxidants that fight cellular damage. Hey, I drink both!
- Olive oil—is a healthy fat that calms inflammation, and some studies have likened it to Ibuprofen. Meh.
- Beans & Nuts—are high in fiber, antioxidants, and nuts have healthy fat. Beans and nuts are top sources of anti-inflammatory nutrients. No black beans, but I'm pretty good with the rest.
- Dark leafy greens—kale, collard greens, spinach 🥬 all have concentrated doses of nutrients that dampen inflammation. Cook them in olive oil or drizzle with salad dressing because a little fat enhances the absorption of the nutrients.
- Spices—many common spices have anti-inflammatory properties like pepper, basil, oregano, ginger, cinnamon, and turmeric. Turmeric is particularly powerful because it prevents certain molecules from entering cells that cause inflammation. Cinnamon buns...Yum.

From now on, I'm not saying I'm fat...just inflamed!