Inflammation Cooking Class for Whole Foods Market
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What Is Inflammation?

Acute inflammation is our body's immune response and protective reaction to injuries, infections, stress, and foreign substances. Our bodies produce acute inflammation in response to potentially harmful irritants so that healing can take place. These irritants signal your white blood cells to launch an immune response to fix the issues. This type of acute inflammation is necessary to help your body heal and recover and is localized. Once the healing takes place acute inflammation goes away.

Chronic inflammation is a different story. Chronic inflammation stays on constantly. A major cause of chronic inflammation in our bodies is the foods we eat. Inflammation is triggered by eating diets high in junk foods, processed foods, high-heat treated refined vegetable and seed oils, refined white sugar, high-fructose corn syrup, artificial sweeteners, refined grains, alcohol, soft drinks, food additives, nitrates, preservatives, pesticides, genetically modified foods, and factory-farm raised animals. Chronic inflammation is also the result of an excessive build up of environmental and mental toxins. Chronic inflammation can even be triggered by healthy foods if you have
food sensitivities or intolerances to them. Many of the foods that you think are healthy can actually increase your toxic load if you're intolerant to them. Food sensitivities or intolerances affect over 80% of the population while less than 5% have a true food allergy. Chronic inflammation is systemic, affecting your organs, digestive and immune system.

### Main Causes of Chronic Inflammation

Diet and lifestyle factors can cause chronic inflammation. Some causes of chronic inflammation include:

- Food sensitivities or intolerances
- Lack of exercise
- Lack of sleep
- Poor Food choices
- Chronic Stress
- Environmental Toxins
- Smoking

### Some of the Health Effects of Chronic Inflammation

- Chronic Inflammation can cause autoimmune diseases such as inflammatory bowel disease and leaky gut.
- Several studies have linked chronic inflammation to coronary heart disease. ([http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC27435/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC27435/))
- Chronic inflammation has been linked to dementia in older adults. ([http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12210786](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12210786))
- Chronic inflammation can cause breakdown of your immune system which can lead to degenerative diseases. ([http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S156816371000111X](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S156816371000111X))
Chronic inflammation can cause premature aging and chronic pain in the body. ([http://bja.oxfordjournals.org/content/87/1/3.full](http://bja.oxfordjournals.org/content/87/1/3.full))

The easiest way to fight chronic inflammation is by upgrading your food and lifestyle choices. There is an amazing variety of whole foods and healing beverages with potent anti-inflammatory properties. These healing foods are one of the easiest ways to get rid of chronic inflammation.

If you don't want to guess at what is causing your inflammation, you can take the Alcat Test. This test will help you discover exactly what foods, food additives, supplements, functional foods, antibiotics, molds, pharmaceutical drugs, and environmental chemicals are causing chronic inflammation in your body. Alcat Laboratories does a blood test to find out exactly what you have sensitivities to so your body can heal. This test also identifies sensitivity to candida, gluten, gliadin, casein, and whey. I offer this reliable test from Alcat and will give you a discount if you want to do it. Visit my website for more information.

**Lifestyle Tips for Reducing Chronic Inflammation**

1. Find out the root cause of the inflammation. (Food sensitivities, toxins, stress, leaky gut, etc.)

2. Remove toxic triggers that cause inflammation. (Poor diet choices, toxicity, heavy metals, etc.)

3. Detoxify the body on a regular basis. (I have a new detox program launching in February that will help you do this with ease. Please visit my site at [http://aharmonyhealing.com](http://aharmonyhealing.com) for more info.)

4. Get enough sleep and reduce stress.
5. Exercise on a weekly basis.

Here is a list of my favorite anti-inflammatory foods that you should include in your diet on a weekly basis to start fighting inflammation.

**Top Anti-inflammatory Foods**

- **Fermented/cultured foods and drinks** – Fermented/cultured foods give vital support to your intestines and immune system. Fermented/cultured foods provide your body with beneficial, healthy bacteria, which digests and absorbs carbohydrates, starches, fibers, and sugars. Beneficial bacteria eliminates toxins, kills bad bacteria, viruses, and pathogens. Beneficial bacteria help heal the digestive tract, promotes healthy gut flora, and reduces inflammation. Fermented/cultured foods are a great source of phytochemicals, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and fiber your body needs for good health. Good choices include fermented sauerkraut, kimchi, coconut kefir, kombucha tea, and beet kvass.

- **Raw, organic green leafy vegetables** – Raw, organic green leafy vegetables include arugula, baby lettuce, butter lettuce, chicory, collard greens, green oak leaf lettuce, kale, mache, mustard greens, red oak leaf lettuce, romaine lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard, turnip greens, and watercress. Leafy greens are nutrient dense and high in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, chlorophyll, phytochemicals, sulfur, silicon, enzymes, and fiber which all fight inflammation.

- **Organic, cruciferous vegetables** – Cruciferous vegetables include arugula, Brussel sprouts, broccoli, bok choy, cabbage,
cauliflower, collard greens, kale, kohlrabi, mustard greens, radishes, rutabaga, turnip greens, turnips, and watercress. These vegetables are nutrient dense and high in phytochemicals, beta carotene, vitamin C, chlorophyll, glucosinolates, minerals, enzymes, and fiber. Cruciferous vegetables remove toxins, protect the body from inflammation, and prevent cancer. Cruciferous vegetables are also an excellent source of sulfur an important mineral for vibrant health.

- **Organic, raw fruits** – Organic, raw fruits are nutrient-rich and filled with phytochemicals, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber. All blackberries, blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, and black grapes contain flavonoids which are phytochemicals and powerful antioxidants which help protect the body against free radical damage, inflammation, and premature aging. Other good fruit choices to fight inflammation include avocado, apples, cantaloupe, cherries, figs, guava, kiwi, kumquats, lemons, limes, oranges, mangos, papaya, pears, pineapples, and tomatoes.

- **Allium family** – The allium family which includes garlic, onion, leeks, scallions, chives, and shallots are rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, flavonoids (quercetin), enzymes, and fiber. The allium family is especially high in sulfur which is a top anti-aging mineral. The allium family helps the liver eliminate carcinogens and toxins that cause chronic inflammation.

- **Raw organic seeds and nuts** – Raw seeds and nuts provide essential omega 3 fatty acids, and are an excellent source of protein, minerals, B vitamins, enzymes, vitamin E, selenium, potassium, magnesium, iron, zinc, copper, and fiber. When nuts and seeds are soaked and allowed to germinate, or sprout, they are easier to digest and their protein is converted into the amino acids that your body needs for optimal health. Walnuts,
flax seeds, hemp seeds, and chia seeds all contain high levels of omega-3 fatty acids in the form of ALA which are potent inflammation fighters.

- **Organic bell peppers (red, orange, yellow)** – Organic bell peppers are rich in flavonoids, phytochemicals, antioxidants, silicon, vitamin C, vitamin E, vitamin A, lycopene, and fiber that protect the body against inflammation. Bell peppers also promote vascular health.

- **Olives and olive oil** – Olives are rich source of omega 3 and oleic fatty acids, calcium, squalene, protein, vitamin A, and vitamin E. Olives also contain polyphenols which are a powerful antioxidant and phytochemical that protects the heart. The healthy monounsaturated fat in olives is converted into anti-inflammatory agents by the body.

- **Wild Seafood** – Wild seafood is an excellent source of protein and the essential omega 3 fatty acids DHA and EPA which help our bodies produce anti-inflammatory compounds (eicosanoids). Best choices are low mercury wild Alaskan salmon, sardines, black cod, mackerel, herring, and anchovies.

- **Spices** – Top spices which fight inflammation include turmeric, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, chili peppers, and nutmeg. Ginger contains gingerol a compound which is a proven inflammation inhibitor.

- **Herbs** – Top herbs which fight inflammation include basil, cilantro, dill, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage, and thyme. Rosemary contains high levels of rosmarinic acid an antioxidant that reduces inflammation responses in the body.

- **Raw Cacao/Dark Chocolate** – Raw cacao and dark chocolate contain flavonoids, top antioxidants, polyphenols, magnesium, and fiber that protect the body against premature aging and inflammation.
- **Kombucha Tea** – Kombucha tea is a fermented beverage made with black or green tea and the Kombucha mushroom which is a colony of good bacteria and yeast. During the fermentation process the tea forms probiotics, enzymes, folic acid, B vitamins, and glucuronic acid which are a natural liver detoxifier. All of these properties protect the body from inflammation and premature aging.

- **Green Tea** – Has polyphenols and flavonoids which are phytochemicals that acts as potent inflammation fighters. Polyphenols and flavonoids are the key to most of the health benefits associated with green tea. The most studied is the flavonoid catechin epigallocatechin-3-gallate (EGCG). One cup of green tea contains 20-35 mg of EGCG. Green tea also has vitamins C, D, K, and iron.

## Common Foods that Cause Inflammation

1. **Refined Sugar, Artificial Sweeteners and Starches** – All foods and drinks that contain these types of sugars and artificial sweeteners will affect your health by spiking your blood sugar, causing cravings, insulin resistance, weight gain, inflammation, and glycation. High fructose corn syrup in particular causes the liver to release enzymes that cause the body to store fat.

   Refined sugar and starches cause a rapid rise in your blood sugar levels. When your blood sugar levels rises rapidly it causes insulin levels to rise, triggering an immune response. Any time your blood sugar levels and/or insulin levels are high, the result is a pro-
inflammatory response. This occurs every time you eat foods containing refined sugars and starches, which will keep your body in a constant state of chronic, low grade inflammation.

2. Heat Processed, Chemically Treated Vegetable/Seed/Legume Oils and Artificial Fats

This includes: soybean oil, canola oil, corn oil, safflower oil, cottonseed oil, grapeseed oil, peanut oil, margarine, hydrogenated shortenings, high heat processed olive oil, butter substitutes, and olestra. Many of these oils are made with genetically modified ingredients. When these oils are processed and extracted with heat it causes them to become unstable, to oxidize, and become rancid, while forming free radicals and trans-fatty acids. These oils are then bleached and deodorized to conceal their rancidity. These oils and fats are difficult for your body to digest, process, and eliminate. Many of these oils are also high in omega-6 fats, reducing your body’s critical balance of omega-3 to omega-6 fats. If you have an excess of omega-6 fatty acids it will make your body get out of balance, resulting in chronic inflammation.

3. Factory-Farm Raised Meats/Poultry/Eggs

Factory farm raised meats and poultry are kept in tight, unsanitary conditions and fed unnatural diets. This diet and environment can result in meat, poultry and eggs that are low in nutrients. For meats it can also change the essential fatty acid profiles making them high in omega 6 and pro-inflammatory. Most of these animals are given growth hormones, steroids, and antibiotics which are not health-promoting.

4. Gluten-Containing Grains

Wheat, rye, bran, kamut, barley, and spelt all contain gluten which can be a common allergen for many people. Whenever an
allergen enters the body, the result is an immediate inflammatory immune response.

5. Peanuts
Peanuts are one of the most common food allergens. There are naturally occurring molds found on peanuts. Even if you don’t have an anaphylactic response to peanuts, your body may recognize them as foreign invaders and create an inflammatory response.

6. Refined Corn
Refined corn is used in a high number of processed foods. The food industry uses corn and corn derivatives such as high-fructose corn syrup, corn starch, and corn oil because it is cheap and easy to get. Refined corn spikes blood sugar which leads to an increase in insulin launching an inflammatory response in the body.

A Harmony Healing is a holistic food, nutrition, and wellness company that makes getting healthy delicious and easy! We offer unique services and a holistic blog with useful tips and healing foods recipes that can help increase your energy, strength and immunity. We’ll provide the support you need to feel and look your best by teaching you the power of healing whole foods and easy holistic lifestyle solutions!

Our site has information about our radiance wellness parties, one-on-one holistic health consultations, anti-aging consultations, healthy group cooking classes, corporate health seminars, holistic supper club events, and Alcat testing to help you achieve your goals. To find out more, please visit my site at http://aharmonyhealing.com.
Anti-inflammatory Recipes

Apple Green Tea Turmeric Tonic
Vegetarian, Paleo, Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free
Makes around 5 cups

6 cups purified or spring water
2 large organic Fuji apples—cut into wedges
2 cinnamon sticks
3-inch piece of fresh turmeric-peeled and cut into chunks or 1 teaspoon organic turmeric powder
3-inch piece fresh ginger—peeled and cut into chunks
⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
⅛ teaspoon black pepper
½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
2 tablespoons raw honey
3 organic green tea bags
2 tablespoons fresh meyer lemon juice

1. Pour water into a large saucepan and add apple wedges, cinnamon sticks, turmeric, ginger, cayenne, black pepper, and vanilla. Stir to combine and bring to a boil over medium-high heat.

2. Once mixture comes to a boil, reduce heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, add green tea bags and stir together. Let tonic simmer for 3-5 minutes longer to allow the tea to steep.

3. After the tea has steeped, remove tea bags and stir in raw honey and lemon juice. Strain tea into a heat proof container and pour into serving cups.

4. Add more honey if you like your tea tonic sweeter. You can also eat the cooked apples and ginger because they are yummy too! Enjoy hot. Tea tonic will last for 1 week if covered and refrigerated.
Wild Blueberry Mango Kefir Smoothie  
Dairy-Free, Gluten-Free, Paleo, Vegan, Vegetarian  
Makes 2- 20 ounce servings

1-16 ounce bottle Mango coconut kefir (Kevita brand)  
2 cups frozen wild blueberries  
1 ripe banana—peeled and broken in half  
¼ teaspoon Ceylon cinnamon  
½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
1 tablespoon chia seeds  
2 cups baby spinach  
Now organic stevia—to taste

1. Place all ingredients in a high speed blender and blend until smooth and creamy. Enjoy immediately.

Smoky Blood Orange Hummus  
Vegan, Vegetarian, Gluten-Free, Nut-Free, Sugar-Free  
Makes around 2 cups

1 (15-ounce) can organic garbanzo beans (chickpeas)  
3 tablespoons raw sesame tahini (Rejuvenate Foods or Living Tree Community Foods)  
¼ cup fresh blood orange juice  
½ teaspoon grated blood orange zest  
⅓ cup O Blood orange olive oil or your favorite extra virgin olive oil  
2 peeled grated garlic cloves  
½ teaspoon cumin powder  
1 teaspoon Himalayan pink salt  
½ teaspoon smoked chipotle pepper powder
1 tablespoon purified or spring water—only if needed

1. Pour beans into a strainer and rinse thoroughly with water. Drain beans well and place in a food processor with S blade attachment or in a blender.

2. Add all the remaining ingredients to food processor or blender except the water and blend until hummus is smooth and creamy. Stop processor or blender to scrape down sides if needed.

3. Taste hummus and add more seasoning if needed to taste. If hummus is too thick, add small amount of purified water 1 tablespoon at a time to get the right consistency.

4. Enjoy immediately, drizzled with olive oil, or place in covered container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

5. Serve Hummus with olives, carrot sticks, and Persian cucumber slices.

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**Dark Chocolate Coconut Butter**  
**Vegan, Vegetarian, Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free**

Makes 1½ cups or 12 ounces

- 4 cups unsweetened organic coconut flakes
- 2-3 tablespoons melted virgin organic coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon coconut sugar
- ⅛ teaspoon unrefined sea salt
- ⅛ teaspoon organic cinnamon
- 1-3.5 ounce organic dark chocolate bar—broken into pieces

1. Place 2 cups of the shredded coconut and 2 tablespoons of melted coconut oil in a high speed blender or food processor and
blend until smooth. If your blender is having trouble breaking down the coconut flakes, add the additional tablespoon of coconut oil.

2. Add remaining 2 cups of coconut flakes and coconut sugar and continue to blend until smooth and buttery. With a high-speed blender this should take 3-5 minutes and in a food processor it will take 10-15 minutes.

3. Add sea salt, cinnamon, and chocolate pieces and blend until completely smooth. It should take less than a minute for the chocolate to melt and blend in.

4. Pour into a clean glass jar with a lid and store at room temperature. Dark chocolate coconut butter will last for many weeks.

5. Serve dark chocolate coconut butter with apple slices or banana slices.