

Can Diet Heal Chronic Pain?

It's been said that you are what you eat, and that's definitely true when it comes to chronic pain.

"A lot of chronic pain is the result of chronic inflammation, and the evidence is quite strong that your diet can contribute to increased systemic inflammation," says Dr. Fred Tabung, a visiting researcher with the Department of Nutrition at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health. "But your diet is also one of the best ways to reduce it."

Inflammation Insight

Inflammation has a good-guy/bad-guy role in your health. When you are injured or become infected, your body signals the immune system to send white blood cells to the affected areas to repair the injury or fight the infection.

When the injury heals or the infection goes away, inflammation normally goes away too. However, sometimes your immune system gets turned on and stays on after the "crisis" has passed.

Over time, this can damage healthy cells and organs and cause constant pain in muscles, tissues, and joints. Chronic inflammation can also raise your risk for heart disease, diabetes, certain cancers, and even Alzheimer's disease.

Diet and the Immune System

How does your diet fit into all this? It's much like a domino effect that works two ways, according to Dr. Tabung.

"Your diet can help support your immune system by having it turn on and turn off at the appropriate times," he says. "Yet a poor diet can alter your immune system, so it acts abnormally, and can contribute to persistent low-grade inflammation." In fact, some studies have found that the immune system reacts to an unhealthy diet in much the same way it would respond to a bacterial infection.

How a healthy diet directly helps the immune system is not quite understood, says Dr. Tabung. However, some evidence suggests that deficiencies in various micronutrients — like zinc, selenium, iron, folic acid, and vitamins A, B6, C, and E — may alter immune system function.

The strongest scientific evidence suggests foods rich in a group of antioxidants known as polyphenols can have an anti-inflammatory effect that helps soothe and prevent painful flare-ups.

These foods include many of the staples of the Mediterranean diet, such as whole fruits (especially all types of berries), dark green leafy vegetables, nuts, legumes, and whole grains.

"Many of these are also rich in the micronutrients your immune system requires to function at a high level," says Dr. Tabung. Some research has suggested that omega-3 fatty acids, which are found in olive oil, flaxseed oil, and fatty fish (salmon, sardines, and mackerel), also may help control inflammation.

Aim for Variety

The best dietary approach to help your immune system, and thus help reduce chronic inflammation, is to cut out the bad inflammatory foods and adopt more of the good anti-inflammatory kinds, says Dr. Tabung.

Many of the bad foods are processed "junk" foods with low nutritional value, including soda and other foods that contain simple sugars like high-fructose corn syrup, processed meat, and white bread.

"Your diet is not a quick-fix pill," says Dr. Tabung, "but it has high potential to help manage and even prevent inflammation, which can help soothe chronic pain."

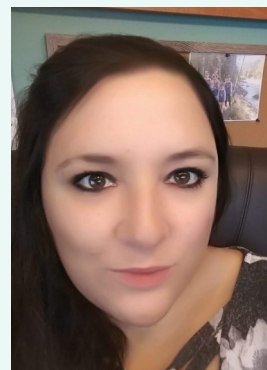
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/pain/can-diet-heal-chronic-pain>(Last Accessed 11/25/2019)

Consultant of the Month Ben Parker



"I have been helping the hearing impaired for almost two years. I decided to join the hearing care industry after I experienced my vision being restored. Up to that point, I never realized how much I took my senses for granted. Since then, it has been my mission to give that kind of joy to others. My favorite part of each day is witnessing how my patients' personalities change after wearing hearing instruments for the first time. Outside of the office I love the beautiful beaches and mountains the Oregon coast has to offer— it truly is the best of both worlds!"

PCC of the Month Pam Gray



"I have been a member of the Miracle-Ear family in Florence and North Bend for 3 months. I have to say...I love my job! Not only do I get to help change the quality of peoples' lives, but I also get to spend valuable time getting to know our patients and their families and friends. We can learn so much from their knowledge and experience. I love to learn from them as much as possible. This job is like no other!"

Cranberry Rosemary One Pan Chicken

Prep Time: 10 mins

Cook Time: 30 mins

Servings: 6 Chicken Thighs

Cranberry Rosemary Marinade

1/3 cup fresh cranberries
2 tbs olive oil or avocado oil
2 tbs coconut aminos or soy sauce
2 tbs maple syrup
3 cloves garlic
1 tsp fresh rosemary leaves
1/4 cup dry white wine

Chicken

3 pounds bone-in skin-on chicken thighs (about 6)
1 tbs olive oil or avocado oil
Salt
1/2 cup fresh cranberries
4 sprigs fresh rosemary (plus more for garnish)
1 tbs maple syrup



1. Combine all marinade ingredients in food processor or blender and process till smooth. Place chicken, skin side up, in a 9x13 baking dish. Pour marinades over chicken, spreading to coat evenly. Cover and marinate in the fridge for at least 30 minutes, up to 24 hours.
2. 30 minutes before baking, remove the dish from fridge and let stand at room temperature.
3. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. With a spoon, scrape marinade from chicken skin, leaving in the baking dish. Brush skins with 1 tbs olive oil and season with plenty of salt. Sprinkle 1/2 cup of fresh cranberries and 4 sprigs of rosemary around chicken thighs.
4. Bake for 22 minutes then remove from oven and preheat broiler. Discard cooked rosemary sprigs.
5. Brush 1 tbs maple syrup over chicken thighs skin. Place under broiler, about 10" from the heating element and broil for 5-7 minutes or until skin is browned.
6. Remove from oven and spoon cranberries and sauce on top of chicken. Garnish with fresh rosemary sprigs and serve immediately with plenty of sauce.

<https://40aprons.com/cranberry-rosemary-one-pan-chicken/> (Last Accessed 11/25/2019)



Riddle of the Month

What is the best present you can
receive for Christmas?

Answer: _____

**STAY TUNED! Answer will be in our January's
Newsletter**

Answer to November's Riddle: Just in case he got a hole in 1.

