

How-to Reduce Inflammation with a Low Acid / High Alkaline Diet

The nutrition science behind the anti-inflammatory benefits of a High Alkaline versus Low Acid Diet is fairly complex so for the sake of simplicity here's how we'll help you understand it: An Alkaline vs Acid Diet refers to the pH Levels of your blood and urine, which is influenced by the minerals in your food.

A highly acidic body steals minerals from bones, cells, tissues and organs whereas a highly alkaline body protects bone density and muscle mass, lowers inflammation, increases vitamin and mineral absorption, and boosts immunity. The reason for this is that research has shown that disease and disorder cannot survive, let alone thrive, in high alkaline pH levels.

The good news is that you don't need to know the science behind how this works in order to switch from an Acid to Alkaline Diet. What you do need to know is that the foods that wreaks havoc in your system, by causing inflammation, are mostly processed foods that are loaded with salt, sugar, refined wheat, and trans fats—all staples of the Standard American Diet (SAD).

Top 10 Pro-Inflammatory Acidic Foods and Why

Sugar	Our bodies can't process the excess glucose from too much sugar fast enough, which ups our levels of pro-inflammatory messengers called cytokines, while suppressing our white blood cells' germ-killing abilities.
Vegetable Oils	Soy, corn, sunflower, safflower and palm oil have high concentrations of the inflammatory fat, Omega-6 fatty acids.
Refined Flour	Refined wheat flours are stripped of fiber and nutrients, which means our bodies digest these very fast, which spikes our blood sugar levels, which spikes our insulin levels, which causes a pro-inflammatory response.
Dairy	Dairy can be a source of inflammation-inducing saturated fats plus dairy is a common allergen with many people being casein or lactose-intolerant. Allergens trigger inflammatory reactions by releasing histamines.
Saturated Fats	Red meat, poultry with skin, cream, butter and cheese are all saturated fats known to trigger adipose (fat tissue) inflammation. With the consumption of more and more saturated fats, this energy storing rather than energy burning fat releases pro-inflammatory agents that promote systemic inflammation.
Grain-fed Meat	Animals raised on grain that is unnatural to their diets means we are consuming meat higher in inflammatory saturated fats, loaded with omega-6 from the animals' corn and soy diet, packed with antibiotics and hormones to reduce disease in the animal. All of this causes inflammation in the animals' systems, which leads to inflammation in our bodies too.

Gluten (Breads)	Store-bought bread gets baked in a few hours, and this shorter fermentation process decreases the amount of starch and gluten the yeast usually pre-digests for us. This makes it harder for our bodies to digest the bread's gluten, causing inflammation in our intestinal lining. Also, many believe that the super starch known as amylopectin A, found in modern strains of wheat, causes inflammation.
Fast Food	Phthalates used in the plastic packaging of fast food has been found to increase inflammation. Combine the packaging with the pro-inflammatory effects of the food itself and it's a highly inflammatory combo.
Excess Alcohol	The process of breaking down alcohol generates toxic by-products that can promote inflammation.
Artificial Additives	Artificial additives wreak havoc on our systems since our bodies react to these substances as they would to invaders in an attempt to defend the body, which activates an inflammatory response.

*Adapted from <https://www.eatthis.com/foods-that-cause-inflammation/>

The very best way to increase your pH alkalinity in order to maintain an inflammation-free system is to include tons of fresh fruit and vegetables in your diet—preferably organic as it is free from pesticides and other chemicals that can cause an inflammatory response in the body.

Top 10 Anti-Inflammatory Alkaline Foods and Why

Blueberries	Blueberries contain an antioxidant called anthocyanins that turns off inflammatory genes. Blueberries are also rich in vitamin C and a polyphenol, resveratrol, which promote anti-inflammatory responses by decreasing inflammatory free radicals.
Raw Oats	Raw oats pass through our guts undigested, which feeds our healthy gut bacteria, producing a fatty acid that encourages more efficient fat oxidation known as butyrate, which helps reduce inflammation.
Ginger	Ginger contains gingerols or antioxidant compounds that are anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and anti-disease. These help to block genes and enzymes in the body that promote inflammation.
Dark Chocolate	Researchers have found that gut microbes in our stomach ferment chocolate into heart-healthy, anti-inflammatory compounds that shut down genes linked to inflammation. (Make sure it's at least 70% cacao and no added sugar).
Red Peppers	Red peppers have a huge amount of inflammatory-biomarker-reducing vitamin C plus luteolin, which neutralizes free radicals and reduces inflammation.

Turmeric	Curcumin, which gives turmeric its bright orange color, is a powerful anti-inflammatory compound. Studies have shown that curcumin directly inhibits the activation of inflammatory pathways by shutting off the production of pro-inflammatory enzymes.
Black Beans	Similar to raw oats, black beans provide a source of fuel for healthy gut bugs to ferment into the inflammation-reducing fatty acid butyrate.
Olive Oil	Researchers have found the key anti-inflammatory component in olive oil to be oleocanthal. It helps reduce joint cartilage damage, working similarly to Ibuprofen in that it prevents the production of pro-inflammatory enzymes.
Chia Seeds	Chia seeds have inflammation fighting ALA Omega-3's making them an inflammation-fighting superfood.
Bone Broth	The stock is full of anti-inflammatory amino acids (glycine and proline), and gelatin, which helps to rebuild our gut lining and assist with our anti-inflammatory gut microbes. (Make sure the stock is made with organic, grass-fed animal bones to get the optimum nutrients).

* Adapted from <https://www.eatthis.com/anti-inflammatory-foods/>

More Alkaline producing foods include (but are not limited to):

Mushrooms / Spinach / Kale / Tomatoes / Citrus / Grapefruit / Dates / Avocado / Cucumber / Broccoli / Beetroot / Bananas / Green Beans / Ginger / Garlic / Jicama / Watermelon / Figs / Pineapple / Eggs / Green Tea / Apples / Nuts / Whole Grains / Oysters / Kamut / Yogurt / Light White Tuna / Rosemary / Coconut Oil / Raw Honey / Miso