

Anti-Inflammatory vs Pro-Inflammatory Foods

Why Inflammation Matters

Chronic inflammation is at the root of many modern health issues-from heart disease and diabetes to autoimmune conditions and even cancer. While short-term inflammation is a natural healing response, long-term, low-grade inflammation can silently damage tissues over time.

The foods we eat play a powerful role in either fueling or fighting that inflammation. The Dietary Inflammatory Index (DII) ranks foods based on their effect on inflammatory markers in the body.

Pro-inflammatory foods (positive DII scores) tend to be ultra-processed, high in sugar, unhealthy fats, and low in nutrients-these can contribute to chronic disease.

Anti-inflammatory foods (negative DII scores) are rich in antioxidants, fiber, vitamins, and omega-3 fatty acids-these support your body's healing and resilience.

Top Anti-Inflammatory Foods

Food	Inflammation Score	Notes
Turmeric	-0.95	Curcumin, powerful compound
Blueberries	-0.82	Anthocyanins + fiber
Leafy greens	-0.80	Rich in vitamins and polyphenols
Tomatoes	-0.78	High in lycopene
Olive oil	-0.72	Polyphenol-rich
Green tea	-0.69	Contains EGCG
Garlic	-0.66	Allicin reduces CRP
Apples	-0.65	Pectin + antioxidants
Nuts	-0.62	Fiber + omega-3s
Fatty fish	-0.60	Omega-3 EPA/DHA
Cruciferous veg	-0.58	Sulforaphane detoxifies
Beans	-0.55	Flavonoids + fiber
Chia & flax seeds	-0.52	Omega-3 and lignans
Red cabbage	-0.49	Rich in anthocyanins
Beets	-0.46	Nitrates improve blood flow

Top Pro-Inflammatory Foods

Food	Inflammation Score	Notes
White bread	+0.72	Refined, lacks fiber
Processed meats	+0.68	High nitrates, omega-6 fats
Sugary soda	+0.56	High glycemic load
Margarine	+0.49	Trans fats
Fried foods	+0.45	Often in unhealthy oils
Ice cream	+0.41	Sugar and saturated fat
Processed red meat	+0.40	Linked to CRP increase
Pastries & donuts	+0.38	Refined carbs and sugar
Alcohol (excess)	+0.31	Can harm gut lining
Mayonnaise	+0.30	High omega-6 oils
Frozen pizza	+0.28	Refined flour and fats
French fries	+0.25	High in acrylamides