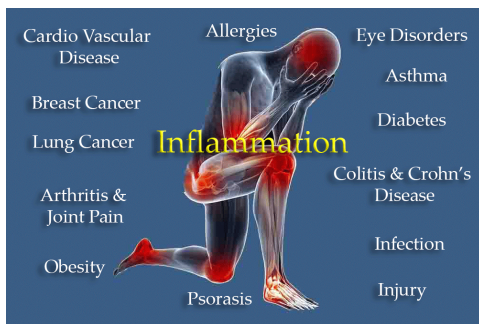




"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."

Psalms 103:2-3

Health & Wellness: The Silent Impact of Chronic Inflammation

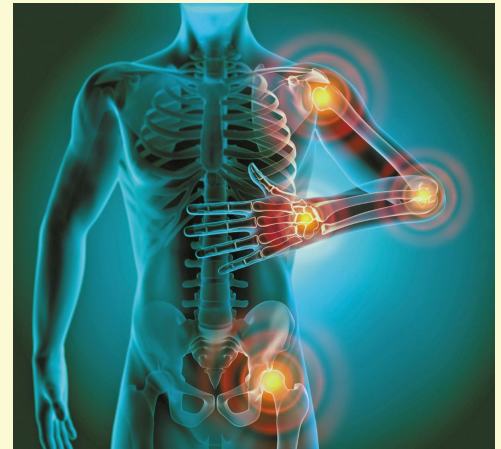
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You might think you're eating pretty healthy. Maybe even "clean."

But what if I told you that some of the most common foods in your kitchen right now are silently triggering chronic inflammation — the kind that slowly chews away at your joints, clogs your arteries, and leaves your body in a constant state of pain and exhaustion?

Over the past several years, I've been spending a lot of time learning about chronic inflammation, and honestly, some of what I've discovered has been eye-opening.

I used to think inflammation was simply what happened when you got injured or were recovering from an illness. What I didn't realize is that chronic inflammation can quietly affect the body over time and has been linked to issues like joint pain, digestive problems, autoimmune conditions, heart disease, and more.



One thing that surprised me most is how many of our everyday food choices may contribute to inflammation without us even realizing it. As I started paying closer attention to what I was eating, I found several common foods in my own kitchen that I decided to reduce or eliminate.

Here are a few of the biggest changes I've made:

1. Limiting Seed Oils

For years, I assumed vegetable oils were one of the healthier options available. However, I learned that many highly processed seed oils, such as corn, soybean, and sunflower oil, contain large amounts of omega-6 fatty acids. While our bodies need some omega-6s, an imbalance between omega-6 and omega-3 fats may contribute to inflammation.

Today, I choose olive oil, avocado oil, and coconut oil more often and try to avoid heavily processed oils whenever possible.

2. Reducing Refined Sugar

This one was difficult. Whether it was a soda, a sweet snack, or dessert after dinner, sugar had become a regular part of our routine. The more I researched, the more I learned about the connection between excess sugar consumption and inflammation. I've become much more mindful about reading labels and watching for hidden sugars, including ingredients like high-fructose corn syrup and dextrose.

3. Choosing Fresh Meats Over Processed Options

I used to purchase deli meats, bacon, and packaged protein snacks because they were convenient. What I didn't realize was how many preservatives and additives they often contain. Now I focus more on fresh, minimally processed protein sources whenever I can. It's a simple change, but one that has helped me feel better overall.

4. Paying Attention to Artificial Additives

Have you ever looked at an ingredient list and struggled to pronounce half the ingredients? Many packaged foods contain preservatives, dyes, emulsifiers, and artificial sweeteners that may negatively affect gut health. Since so much of our immune system is connected to the gut, I've become much more selective about the foods I bring home.

My rule now is simple: the shorter and more recognizable the ingredient list, the better.

Start using a detoxifying tincture to speed up the process – this one is so powerful it can clean up your blood, liver and gut at the same time. **Taking Plantain together with Slippery Elm and Marshmallow** not only curbs these cravings, it supports your gut and fills you with energy in a way that you don't even feel like reaching out for those things in the first place.

5. Cutting Back on Refined Carbohydrates

White bread, pastries, cereal, and pasta were staples in my diet for years. While there's nothing wrong with enjoying these foods occasionally, I've learned that heavily refined carbohydrates can cause blood sugar spikes that may contribute to inflammation over time. I've been replacing these foods with whole grains, vegetables, and other nutrient-dense options whenever possible. Hidden in carbohydrates: rice and potatoes.

6. Avoiding Trans Fats

Trans fats were once common in many processed foods, and while they've become less common, they can still show up in certain packaged products. I now make it a habit to check labels for "partially hydrogenated oils" and avoid products that contain them.

7. Re-Evaluating Alcohol Consumption

This was area where I had never been a big drinker; however, I have chosen to not even have a drink. While occasional alcohol may fit into some lifestyles, I learned that alcohol can place stress on the body, impact gut health, and contribute to inflammation when consumed regularly or in excess. I've become more intentional about how often and how much I drink (never).

Looking Beyond Quick Fixes

One lesson that really stuck with me is that there isn't a magic pill that solves chronic inflammation.

Like many people, I used to reach for over-the-counter pain relievers whenever I experienced aches and pains. While those medications can certainly have their place, they don't address the underlying lifestyle factors that may be contributing to inflammation in the first place. For me, the biggest improvements came from focusing on nutrition, movement, sleep, stress management, and supporting my body's natural ability to heal.

I am adding in this **video** again about autophagy along with prayer and fasting!

Final Thoughts

I'm still learning, and I don't claim to have all the answers. But making these small, consistent changes has helped me become more aware of what I'm putting into my body and how those choices affect how I feel.

If you've been dealing with low energy, joint discomfort, digestive issues, or simply want to improve your overall health, it may be worth taking a closer look at some of the foods and habits that have become part of your daily routine. **VIDEO**

Start jump roping or bouncing on a trampoline, move your body, be mindful, be prayerful, and enjoy learning! Sometimes the biggest health breakthroughs start with the smallest changes.

Sending much love ~ Sandy

Kathy's Korner kathysgardengoods

Plantain

(Plantago Major & Lanceolata)



Plantain (narrow leaf) growing in between the pavers behind my house

At least once every summer I'll be working in my garden and suddenly it feels like fire running down my leg. Immediately I know that I have been stung by a wasp or yellow jacket. Hmm... what do I have growing in my garden that I can use to stop the pain?

Plantain! You can take a leaf and chew it to make a **spit poultice** and apply it to the sting to dull the pain and reduce the inflammation. If that grosses you out, you can use dried leaves to make a salve to have on hand.

Plantain is an herb easily confused with a weed. You may have it growing in your yard or find it along paths while hiking in a park. However, it is an herb that has a long history in traditional medicine.

There are two types of plantain, broad and narrow leaf. It is a perennial and very easy to grow, but know that if you add it to your garden it will take over if left unattended.

The Garden

Our area has received very little rain this Spring and now we are in "exceptional drought," the highest category. However, by God's grace my garden is continuing to flourish.

I have learned that during these extremely hot days one way to keep your garden productive is to put up a **shade cloth**. This will reduce water usage and reduce stress on your plants. However, you will need to research the light diffusion percentage for your area.

If you want to grow a few plants or herbs and ensure they are getting enough water, I suggest using a **Greenstalk Vertical Garden**. You simply fill the top reservoir to the suggested mark and it waters all the tiers below. Depending on the weather you need to fill your GS with water every 2-3 days. I have strawberries that grow all season long (everbearing) in my Greenstalk.

Keep gardening on! I pray that God will give you renewed strength, and you will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring that continually produce water. (Isaiah 58:11)

Sunburn Spray

Growing up in Florida, we were always in the sun and had a nice tan. Well, one year a friend and I decided to go to the beach and we spent the day laying in the sun covered in baby oil. What!?! You guessed it, we baked ourselves! That was the only time I remember being sunburned and it was miserable.

If only my younger self had known about herbs and their cooling, healing properties. . . and skipped the baby oil.

Plantain reduces inflammation and promotes wound healing. It can be dried and used to make a salve or oil which is useful for certain skin conditions like eczema, dermatitis, and sunburn. Make a tea, tincture or even eat it raw. Every part of the plant is useable!



Sunburn Spray

A cooling spray to relieve hot, burned skin

Ingredients:

1 tsp dried plantain
1 tsp dried peppermint leaves
1 tsp calendula petals
1 tsp rose petals
1 cup just boiled water
Optional: To add more sunburn healing add aloe vera gel, lavender essential oil

Directions:

Add your herbs to a pint jar, and cover with just boiled water (about half full). Steep 20 minutes to an hour for a stronger infusion.
Strain off the liquid.
Optional: add 25 drops lavender essential oil to a tablespoon of aloe vera gel, then combine with the tea
Shake your spray well if adding the essential oils and aloe vera gel.
Refrigerate and use within three days.

Spray generously on sunburned skin

Resource: www.healingharvesthomestead.com

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