

MG and Food

What Foods to Eat and What Foods to Avoid
When Dealing with MG

Rebecca Molitoris



Eating Safely with a Suppressed Immune System

- ▶ There are many pathogens that can cause food born illness in immune-suppressed individuals.
- ▶ The foods you choose and how you cook and store them can reduce your risk of becoming ill from one of these pathogens.

Eating with a Suppressed Immune System Cont.

- ▶ **Choose Wisely** – Choose cooked meats, poultry, and seafood over raw or undercooked foods.
- ▶ It is recommended to cook meats to the following temperatures:
- ▶ **Beef, pork, veal, and lamb chops, roasts and steaks to 145° F**
- ▶ **Fish to 145° F**
- ▶ **Ground beef, pork, veal, and lamb and egg dishes to 160° F**
- ▶ **Turkey, chicken, and duck whole or ground to 165° F**
- ▶ Buy a portable food thermometer for accurate measuring.

Eating with a Suppressed Immune System Cont.

- ▶ **Hot Dogs and Deli Meats**—These meats should be heated to 165 °F.
- ▶ Choose hot lunch meat sandwiches over cold.
- ▶ Think Panini or Patty Melt
- ▶ Note: These types of meats need to be reheated before eating them because the bacteria *listeria monocytogenes* grows at temps 40 or below. This bacterium is known to cause severe illness or even death.

Eating with a Suppressed Immune System Cont.

- ▶ Wash vegetables thoroughly - including pre-washed salads.
- ▶ Use a dedicated vegetable brush for scrubbing.
- ▶ An easy home wash can be made with 1-part white vinegar to 5 parts water and ½ part baking soda. (Ex. 2 ½ c water, ½ c vinegar, ¼ c baking soda. Combine soda and water and slowly pour into vinegar. Spray on food, rinse and dry.)
- ▶ Avoid eating raw sprouts or any unwashed raw vegetables. Blanch hard to wash foods.

Eating with a Suppressed Immune System Cont.

- ▶ **Eggs** – Avoid undercooked or raw eggs such as raw cookie dough or homemade Caesar dressing.
- ▶ Use only pasteurized eggs. Note: most retail dressings and cookie dough are made with pasteurized eggs.
- ▶ **Milk and Cheeses**– Use only pasteurized milk and soft cheeses made from pasteurized milk.
- ▶ Avoid soft cheeses made from raw milk.
- ▶ Hard cheeses, processed cheese and cream cheese are generally safe to eat.

Chronic Inflammation and MG

- ▶ Chronic inflammation plays a crucial role in the development and progression of autoimmune illnesses. It is characterized by a prolonged immune response that can lead to tissue damage and various diseases, including autoimmune disorders.
- ▶ Chronic inflammation occurs when the immune system mistakenly attacks healthy tissues, leading to sustained inflammation. This process is a hallmark of autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, multiple sclerosis, and myasthenia gravis.
- ▶ Factors contributing to chronic inflammation include genetic predisposition, environmental triggers, and infections

Chronic Inflammation and MG Cont.

- ▶ While we cannot control genetic predisposition, we do have some role to play in avoiding environmental triggers (including diet) and avoiding some infections.
- ▶ There are certain classifications of foods that can either increase or help to reduce your chronic inflammation load.
- ▶ There are also some options concerning food procurement and preparation that can make the foods you choose more able to reduce your inflammation load.
- ▶ The next few slides explore these options.

Chronic Inflammation and MG Cont.

- ▶ When procuring food, choose foods that are closest to their natural state. (ex. Whole fruits and vegetables instead of those processed.)
- ▶ Consider planting a kitchen garden or buy organic vegetables and fruits.
- ▶ The Fruits and Vegetables that matter most for organically grown are those with thin skins like strawberries or peppers.
- ▶ Fruits and Veggies that will be peeled, bananas, oranges, mangoes, sweet potatoes, etc. don't need to be organic.
- ▶ If you can't get organic, be sure and scrub your fruits and vegetables using the spray wash from before.

Chronic Inflammation and MG Cont.

- ▶ Avoid other environmental triggers by using natural cleaning products instead of harsh chemicals:
- ▶ Common baking soda makes a great cleaning solution used straight for scrubbing sinks and tubs.
- ▶ To clean the microwave, place $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon in a bowl of water and boil for 10 minutes. Then wipe microwave clean with a paper towel.
- ▶ Clean your oven by sprinkling coarse salt on $\frac{1}{2}$ of a lemon and using to scrub the bottom and sides of your oven.
- ▶ Clean windows with a solution of 1 part vinegar to 4 parts water, wipe with newspaper or paper towels.
- ▶ Outdoors - instead of using harsh chemicals, pour straight vinegar into ant piles to get rid of ants.
- ▶ Sprinkle cayenne powder around base of house to prevent ants.

Chronic Inflammation and MG Cont.

- ▶ Certain foods can add to your chronic inflammation or help relieve it.
- ▶ The following slides explain what not and what to eat to help with your chronic inflammation.
- ▶ Please take the information that is helpful for you - not everyone reacts in the same way.
- ▶ Even the foods suspected of adding to inflammation contain certain health benefits when eaten in moderation.
- ▶ If in doubt, consult your physician about trying an elimination diet to see what works best for you.

Nightshades and MG

- ▶ Nightshades are a classification of vegetables containing alkaloids. These are often thought to cause pain and inflammation. Common edible nightshades include:
- ▶ Potatoes (except for sweet potatoes)
- ▶ Tomatoes
- ▶ Eggplant
- ▶ Peppers - Bell, Chili, jalapenos
- ▶ Sorrel
- ▶ Okra
- ▶ Goji Berries
- ▶ Golden Berries
- ▶ Spices - Paprika, Red Pepper Flakes, Cayenne, Chili Powder

Inflammation Causing Foods

- ▶ The following foods may increase inflammation:
- ▶ Processed grains in the form of breads, cereals, crackers, etc.
- ▶ Red Meats (grass fed beef is better)
- ▶ Processed lunchmeats
- ▶ Hot dogs and sausage
- ▶ Bacon
- ▶ Foods containing trans-fats

Foods that Help Inflammation

- ▶ Leafy Green Vegetables - kale, spinach, lettuce, cabbage, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, parsley, broccoli, etc.
- ▶ Tomatoes
- ▶ Deep yellow and orange vegetables and fruits - squash, cantaloupe, carrots, peaches
- ▶ Other vegetables - okra, green beans, green peppers, onions, zucchini
- ▶ Apples and Berries - pears, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, cherries
- ▶ Other Fruits - Pineapples, honeydew, grapes, kiwi, watermelon, lemon, oranges, grapefruit

Protein Foods that Help Inflammation

- ▶ Poultry - chicken or turkey
- ▶ Fish - tuna, salmon, other light and dark meat fish
- ▶ Nuts - peanuts, peanut butter, walnuts, pecans, almonds
- ▶ Dairy - Non-gmo milk, cheese, ice cream, and yogurt
- ▶ Legumes - beans, peas, lentils

Spices that Help Inflammation

- ▶ Turmeric
- ▶ Ginger
- ▶ Garlic
- ▶ Onion
- ▶ Saffron
- ▶ Pepper
- ▶ Thyme/Oregano
- ▶ Rosemary

Compounds that Help Fight Pain

- ▶ Bromelain is a compound that helps fight inflammatory pain by reducing inflammation and also aids in digestion.
- ▶ Bromelain is primarily found in the following foods:
- ▶ **Pineapple:** The fruit and especially the core are rich in bromelain.
- ▶ **Papaya:** Contains proteases similar to bromelain, aiding digestion.
- ▶ **Mango:** While not as high in bromelain, it contains digestive enzymes.
- ▶ **Honey:** Contains various beneficial compounds, including some digestive enzymes.

- ▶ Bromelain is mainly concentrated in pineapple, making it the best source.

Compounds that Help Fight Pain

- ▶ Curcumin is naturally found in several foods, primarily in turmeric.
- ▶ Key Sources of Curcumin:
- ▶ **Turmeric:** The most well-known source, used widely in cooking and traditional medicine.
- ▶ **Ginger:** Contains curcumin in smaller amounts, contributing to its health benefits.
- ▶ **Curry Powder:** Often includes turmeric as a primary ingredient, thus providing curcumin along with other spices.
- ▶ **Mango Ginger:** A lesser-known source that also contains curcumin.
- ▶ Incorporating these foods into the diet can enhance curcumin intake, which is recognized for its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.

Taking Prednisone? Try These Potassium Rich Foods

- ▶ Potassium rich foods in milligrams of available potassium per serving:
- ▶ Bananas and plantains: 422 mg
- ▶ Leafy greens:
 - ❑ Beet greens: 1,309 mg
 - ❑ Swiss chard: 961 mg
 - ❑ Spinach: 839 mg
 - ❑ Kohlrabi: 561 mg
 - ❑ Broccoli rabe: 550 mg

Taking Prednisone? Try These Potassium Rich Foods Cont.

► Beans

- ❑ Lima beans (1 cup, cooked): 969 mg
- ❑ Adzuki (red) beans (1/2 cup, cooked): 612 mg
- ❑ White beans (1/2 cup, cooked): 502 mg
- ❑ Kidney beans (1/2 cup, cooked): 359 mg
- ❑ Navy beans (1/2 cup, cooked): 354 mg
- ❑ Great Northern beans (1/2 cup, cooked): 346 mg

Taking Prednisone? Try These Potassium Rich Foods Cont.

► Squash

- ❑ Acorn squash (1/2 cup, cooked): 896 mg
- ❑ Butternut squash (1/2 cup, cooked): 582 mg
- ❑ Winter squash (1/2 cup, cooked): 494 mg
- ❑ Pumpkin (1 cup, canned): 505 mg

Potatoes (whole baked): 900 mg

Sweet Potatoes: 450 mg

Cooked Portabello Mushrooms: 529 mg

Taking Prednisone? Try These Potassium Rich Foods Cont.

- ▶ Clams: 534 mg
- ▶ Fish
 - Halibut: 662 mg
 - Mackerel: 352 mg
 - Rainbow trout (freshwater): 409 mg
 - Red snapper: 444 mg
 - Salmon: 430 mg
 - Tuna: 352 mg

Taking Prednisone? Try These Potassium Rich Foods Cont.

► Dairy

- ❑ Yogurt (nonfat): 625 mg
- ❑ Yogurt (low-fat): 573 mg
- ❑ Kefir (plain, low-fat): 399 mg
- ❑ Milk, fat-free (skim): 382 mg
- ❑ Milk, lowfat (1%): 366 mg
- ❑ Greek yogurt (plain, nonfat or low-fat): 320 mg

Taking Prednisone? Try These Potassium Rich Foods Cont.

▶ Juices

- ❑ Prune juice: 689 mg
- ❑ Tomato juice: 527 mg
- ❑ Pomegranate juice: 533 mg
- ❑ Vegetable juice: 518 mg
- ❑ Orange juice: 496 mg

Taking Prednisone? Try These Potassium Rich Foods Cont.

► Fruits

- ❑ Cantaloupe: 400 mg
- ❑ Dates: 482 mg
- ❑ Figs: 93 mg
- ❑ Nectarines: 285 mg
- ❑ Peaches: 285 mg
- ❑ Avocado: 400 mg

MG and Muscle Cramps

- ▶ Muscle cramps are one of the most common complaints of people with MG
- ▶ Muscle cramping can be caused by a variety of reasons:
 - ❑ Weak Muscles
 - ❑ Mestinon
 - ❑ Prednisone
 - ❑ Electrolyte Imbalance
 - ❑ Dehydration

MG and Muscle Cramps Cont.

- ▶ Certain foods may help reduce or eliminate muscle cramping:
 - ❑ Acidic juices like orange or grapefruit
 - ❑ Mustard
 - ❑ Vinegar
 - ❑ Electrolyte Drinks
 - ❑ Water
 - ❑ If cramping continues, contact your doctor.

Mestinon and Gut Health

- ▶ Mestinon may be harsh on your gut. The following foods may be taken with Mestinon to help reduce its side effects:
 - ❑ Cheese
 - ❑ Yogurt
 - ❑ Crackers or bread
 - ❑ Take a probiotic daily

Medication and Swallowing

▶ Medication may be difficult to swallow especially when feeling weak. Check with your doctor to see if it is acceptable to crush your pills into one of the following:

- ❑ Applesauce
- ❑ Yogurt
- ❑ Milkshake

NOTE: Never crush the extended form of Mestinon (180mg) or any other pill with extended release on its label.

QUESTIONS?

- ▶ This presentation will be available soon online in pdf and video form at <http://www.mgohio.org>

