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Hot and Bothered, or What to Do About Inflammation

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2.Omega 3 Oils: "Cooling down the insides" can be accomplished nutritionally by taking omega-3 oils. Fish oils are best, but some lower-cost ones may contain contaminants. You can consult with your nutritionist or health care provider about dosage, since it can vary. (Also refer to my previous article, Vol.2 #24).

GET OFF IT!

3.Give it a Rest: If it was a back strain, rest and while you're off your feet, try to figure out how it happened. Were you hunching over the computer? Were you lifting incorrectly? Consult a spinal health care provider if you need assistance.

4.Remove the Trigger: This sounds like common sense because it is. If eating dairy products gives you congestion, gas or discomfort, it's a signal that something is off with your digestion and should be investigated. If you have no digestive symptoms but other conditions, check out whether those conditions can be related to nutrition.

GET INTO?BALANCE!

5.Change Your Diet: Some foods promote inflammation, others reduce it. Fatty acid balance is important. Eat less red meat, dairy, shellfish, omega 6 oils, and trans-fats. Eat more walnuts, pumpkin seeds, arugula, canola oil, and cold water fish (but don't exceed 3 - 4 times per week).

6.Pay Attention to your Body Composition: A healthy ratio of body fat-to-lean mass directly impacts your inflammatory status. Excess fat, especially around the waistline, produces inflammatory cells which promote chronic inflammation. Fat also stores estrogens, and whether you're male or female, this can cause hormonal disturbances in sexual and reproductive functioning, a basic example of

Everyone has experienced the general symptoms of inflammation - aches, pain, redness, heat and swelling. But have you ever thought of what lies behind it? It's a near-miracle that our bodies have so many mechanisms in place to deal with potentially dangerous environmental conditions. Inflammation's goal is protection and self-preservation, but it can be harmful when chronic. A chronic inflammatory state can lead to allergies, arthritis, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, autoimmune conditions, and even some forms of cancer.

How Chronic Inflammation Contributes to Disease

Let's understand the generalities. A healthy immune system is wonderfully designed and via messenger molecules, efficiently handles most situations. Suppose you strain your back, or you're exposed to viruses going around, or even to certain digestive irritants. Damaged cells release signals, setting off chemical and cellular chain reactions to eliminate the problem. Specialized cells "clean up" and repair a muscle strain. With a virus, white blood cells rush in to engulf while fever "cooks" the bug. When the digestive tract is exposed to an allergen or irritant, antibodies may "attack" the offender but also damage the surrounding digestive tract. Think of antibodies as tiny robots programmed to circulate around and "destroy enemies." When "the enemy" exists on a regular basis (e.g. a food to which one is allergic), such "robots" are continually manufactured. One theory is that chronically elevated antibodies damage some organs because of cellular similarities to the "enemy," resulting in dysfunction and eventually autoimmune disease.

Six Ways to Rid Yourself of Inflammation:

COOL?THOSE?JETS!

1.Ice: With a strain or sprain, ice is Nature's best anti-inflammatory, and there are no side effects. Ice quickly after the injury, every other 15 minutes over the course of a few hours during the first two days. Timing is critical for best results, but even if you cannot get to it immediately, it pays to ice.

"adding insult to injury!"

We need an alert and highly functional immune system in today's world, one that's balanced and allowed to "rest" after a job well done. Paying attention to your diet and lifestyle improves your ability to ward off disease, pain and discomfort.

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