



REDUCING  
**INFLAMMATION**  
WITH PROPER NUTRITION

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PERFORMANCE THERAPIES, P.C.

# REDUCING INFLAMMATION WITH PROPER NUTRITION

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*Our bodies have an amazing capacity for healing.*

Inflammation is an important – and normal – start of the healing process for acute injuries and problems in the body.

**Chronic inflammation** is what we want to target and eliminate. Chronic inflammation can last for months or years and persists because of repeated exposure to irritants such as poor diet, food allergies or sensitivities, sedentary lifestyle, and other poor health habits. Chronic inflammation is linked to conditions such as fibromyalgia, joint pain, heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's, depression, autoimmune conditions, and arthritis.

Even if you don't have any of these conditions, improvements in your diet and lifestyle can enhance the body's response to physical therapy and fitness-related activities, and can reduce inflammation – which leads to a reduction in pain and susceptibility to chronic health conditions, as well as increasing quality of life.

In general, it's best to avoid excessive calorie intake because it stimulates fat cells and promotes obesity (a state of chronic inflammation). It's also recommended to avoid excessive simple carbohydrates and sugar intake – in the form of candy, baked goods, white bread and rice, and sugar-sweetened beverages. Simple carbs increase insulin levels and promote inflammation. Eating trans and saturated fats such as hydrogenated vegetable oils, bacon, fatty beef, pork, butter, and cream raises cholesterol and LDL, and also stimulate an inflammatory response in cardiac tissues.

Reducing inflammation isn't all about the "things to avoid" and restricting our diet to the extreme. It's about learning the habits and foods we should embrace, and incorporating them into our daily routine. We've assembled an expansive list of the foods and habits known for reducing inflammation – that can lead to a reduction in the amount of pain caused by inflammation. Consider this a quick reference guide for incorporating more anti-inflammatory foods into a regular diet.

For more nutrition tips and additional information on reducing inflammation, contact our registered dietitian at **319-665-2630** or visit **[ptforhealth.com/nutrition-services](http://ptforhealth.com/nutrition-services)**.

# HABITS TO EMBRACE

HABIT	SOURCES/TIPS	REASON
Stay hydrated	water, fruits, vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assists in heat regulation</li> <li>- Decreases risk of injury and muscle cramps</li> <li>- Helps transport nutrients and oxygen and eliminate waste products out of the body</li> </ul>
Eat foods rich in Omega-3 fatty acids	salmon, tuna, mackerel, herring, walnuts, flaxseed, and chia seeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supports brain health</li> <li>- Reduces inflammation</li> </ul>
Eat foods rich in antioxidants (beta-carotene, lutein, lycopene, selenium, vitamins A, E, and C)	carrots, pumpkin, apricots, sweet potatoes, kale, spinach, tomatoes, watermelon, papaya, almonds, mangos, nuts, broccoli, berries, cauliflower, and citrus fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improves muscle recovery</li> <li>- Reduces inflammation</li> </ul>
Eat foods rich in vitamin C	citrus fruit, bell peppers, and cantaloupe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supports collagen synthesis aiding in wound healing and tissue repair</li> <li>- Promotes immune function</li> </ul>
Eat foods rich in vitamin A	sweet potato, spinach, carrots, and tomatoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aids in cell growth and development</li> <li>- Promotes good immune function</li> </ul>
Eat foods rich in vitamin D	sun exposure, oily fish, dairy products, and fortified foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotes calcium absorption and good bone health</li> <li>- Regulates inflammatory response</li> </ul>
Eat foods rich in zinc	almonds, sunflower seeds, cashews, lean beef, chicken, seafood, and fortified cereals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aids in wound healing and protein synthesis</li> <li>- Promotes good immune function</li> </ul>
Season with herbs and spices	ginger, turmeric, garlic, cinnamon, rosemary, oregano, and cloves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contains antioxidants to reduce inflammation</li> </ul>
Eat more polyphenols	fruits, vegetables, whole grains, coffee, tea, chocolate, and olive oil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduces inflammation</li> <li>- Reduces risk of chronic diseases</li> </ul>
Eat more probiotics and prebiotics	PRO: yogurt, aged cheese, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, and tempeh PRE: garlic, onions, asparagus, artichokes, and bananas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotes growth of desirable microflora in the gut improving digestive health</li> <li>- Promotes immune function</li> <li>- Decrease activity of pro-inflammatory cells</li> </ul>
Get enough sleep	aim for 7-8 hours per night	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduces levels of C-Reactive protein and pro-inflammatory response</li> </ul>
Reduce stress	work, relationships, financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Constant psychological, emotional or physical stress raises cortisol levels in the body, which increases inflammation</li> </ul>
Make time to relax	meditation, yoga, laughing, hiking, reading, and massage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relaxation is one stress reduction technique that can lower cortisol levels, and therefore, inflammation</li> </ul>



## **Performance Therapies, P.C.**

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### **Cedar Rapids**

645 32nd Ave SW  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404  
319-363-2901

### **Coralville**

3290 Ridgeway Dr  
Coralville, IA 52241  
319-665-2630

### **Hiawatha**

762 N Center Point Rd  
Hiawatha, IA 52233  
319-294-6717

### **Kalona**

511 D Ave  
Kalona, IA 52247  
319-656-2630