



December 2015

December: Inflammation and Your Health

When you sprain an ankle or get an infection, your body jumps into action to protect and heal you. This is called the Inflammatory Process.

Signs of inflammation include:

- ◆ swelling
- ◆ redness
- ◆ pain
- ◆ increased warmth in the area
- ◆ decrease in movement



There are two types of inflammation:

1. **Acute inflammation** is the normal, short-term, natural response needed for you to heal.
2. **Chronic inflammation** is not normal. It happens when the processes of acute inflammation don't succeed in healing an injury or stopping an infection.

Not eating right, having too much stress, and not exercising enough can also cause inflammation. This can damage healthy tissue and joints.

On-going inflammation may lead to conditions like asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, inflammatory bowel disease and cancer

A C-Reactive Protein (CRP) test is one way your doctor might check for inflammation. The CRP test shows if there is inflammation somewhere in your body.

To reduce unnecessary, harmful, inflammation, try these lifestyle suggestions:

- ◆ Exercise – both aerobic and weight training.
- ◆ Lose weight – people who are overweight have more inflammation.
- ◆ Manage your stress.

- ◆ Eat foods that may decrease inflammation like cold water fish (salmon and tuna), garlic, walnuts, soybeans, grapes, olive oil, celery and blueberries.
- ◆ Avoid foods with white flour, refined sugar, and white rice.
- ◆ Cut out foods that may cause inflammation like red meat, deep fried and processed foods, eggs, and anything with trans fats.

If you want more information about foods and inflammation, including a helpful app, check out this site: <http://inflammationfactor.com/if-rating-system/>

Nutrition Nook

Healthy Substitutes for Holiday Cooking

You can enjoy your favorite traditional holiday dishes **and** make them a bit healthier at the same time! Here are some tips:



- ◆ Keep the crunch and lose the unhealthy fat – substitute slivered almonds for french-fried onions on top of the green beans.
- ◆ Try fresh fruit as a topping on desserts instead of frostings, jams or syrups.
- ◆ Baking a cake? Replace one egg with two egg whites. This will make the cake fluffier and healthier.
- ◆ Reduce the amount of sugar in recipes. Most baked goods can have the sugar decreased by one-fourth to one-third without any noticeable difference in taste or texture.
- ◆ Try using applesauce as a substitute for some of the oil in baked goods. The result is usually sweeter and moister!
- ◆ Choose low-fat dairy products over regular versions. They have much fewer calories. Try plain fat-free yogurt instead of sour cream as a topping on soups or in dips and potato dishes.

Holiday Safety Tips

The holidays should be a time of fun and joy for you and your family! Don't let an accident ruin your season. Here are some tips:

- ♦ When hanging up decorations, use a step stool or ladder instead of furniture like chairs or tables. When on a ladder, always maintain three points of contact, face the ladder, and keep your hips between the side rails – don't overreach!
- ♦ Holiday lights should be labeled "UL listed." If not, don't use them. Use only lights approved for indoor use inside your home and be sure they are away from anything that can catch fire.
- ♦ Leave the fireworks to professionals.
- ♦ Keep a close eye on children. Make sure choking hazards like coins and hard candy, as well as potentially dangerous toys, food, and drinks are out of children's reach.
- ♦ Most home fires happen in the winter. Never leave fireplaces, stoves, or candles unattended. Keep candles away from children, pets, trees and curtains.
- ♦ Do not use generators or grills in your home or garage and be sure you have working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- ♦ Keep your family and guests safe from food-related illnesses by washing your hands and surfaces often. Keep raw foods (and their juices) like meat, poultry, eggs, and seafood away from ready-to-eat foods. Cook foods to their proper temperature. When done, place foods in refrigerator quickly. Do not leave foods that can go bad out for more than 2 hours.



A Healthier Holiday Dessert Idea – Pumpkin Pudding Parfait with Gingersnaps

Ingredients:

- 1 (1-oz) pkg. fat-free, sugar free instant cheesecake pudding mix
- 1 2/3 cups skim milk
- 1 cup canned pure pumpkin
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 cup plus 7 tsp light whipped topping, divided
- 7 gingersnap cookies, crumbled

Instructions:

1. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together the pudding mix and milk for 2 minutes. Let stand for 5 minutes.
2. Fold in the pumpkin, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Fold in 1/2 cup whipped topping and refrigerate for 10 minutes.
3. Scoop 1/2 cup pudding mixture into each parfait glass. Top each with 1 tsp whipped topping and 1 crumbled gingersnap cookie.

(Recipe from The American Diabetes Association website)

Holiday Exercise Tips Continued:

Here are some more ideas to help keep your exercise routine on track during the busy holiday season:



- ♦ Look for ways to find exercise in the holiday experience
- ♦ Going to the mall to shop? Park your car way out in the lot. You will not only avoid the stressful battle for parking close to the store, but will also burn calories walking instead.
- ♦ Before you start shopping, take a lap around the mall. You will get the good aerobic exercise you need and may even spot that "perfect gift" as you pass by the store windows
- ♦ Tap the holiday energy and excitement of children. Spending time with your kids or your nieces and nephews? Try to keep up with them! Chase the kids around the house or take them out to play – that will bring the kid out in you, plus give you a great workout too!