

## Healthy Living Newsletter

A MedWatch publication to keep you healthy and informed.

August, 2017

### Nutrition Corner

#### Go Mediterranean Combat Inflammation



We all know that a Mediterranean-style diet—rich in fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, olive oil, and fish—is known to protect the heart. But did you know that it also reduces the level of pro-inflammatory chemicals in the body? Here are some of the components of this easy-to-adopt diet:

**Fatty fish.** Oily fish, like salmon, mackerel, tuna and sardines, are high in omega-3 fatty acids, which can help reduce inflammation. Aim to eat fish several times a week, cooked in healthy ways.

**Olive oil.** Oleocanthal, the source of olive oil's distinctive aftertaste, has been shown to have similar effects as ibuprofen, an inflammation reducer.

**Berries.** Berries such as raspberries and blueberries have especially strong anti-inflammatory benefits due to the antioxidant flavonoids that give berries their rich color.

**Whole grains.** Consuming most of your grains as whole grains - as opposed to refined, white bread, cereal, rice, and pasta - can help keep harmful inflammation at bay.

### Taking Control of Your Health

#### Chronic Inflammation - The Enemy Inside You

You twist your ankle stepping off a curb and soon it's red, swollen, tender, and radiating heat. Those are all signs of inflammation.

Inflammation comes in different forms. The type that makes your ankle swell is called acute inflammation and is actually good for your body; it's the healing process that makes that ankle feel better a few days later.

**Chronic inflammation**, on the other hand, is not so good. The body's immune system has a tendency to respond not only to injuries but to the many irritants that affect our general health. Instead of helping your body heal, chronic inflammation is a slow, silent disturbance that never stops. You can't feel it. You can't be tested for it. Yet it has become a medical hot topic: experts say when inflammation becomes chronic it can damage heart valves and brain cells, trigger strokes, and can lead to diabetes. It is also associated with the development of cancer.

**What Causes Chronic Inflammation?** Various lifestyle factors contribute to chronic inflammation, but one of the most influential causes is your diet. The biggest culprits are processed and sugary foods, as well as trans fats, which are present in a variety of snack foods, fried foods, and baked goods. Sedentary lifestyle and obesity also contribute to inflammation as well as stress, anxiety, alcohol, tobacco and impure air.

**How Can I Fight Chronic Inflammation?** There are several strategies that can help you reduce your risk of dangerous inflammation. They include:

- **Pile your plate with fruits and veggies.** Plants are by far the best inflammation-fighting food. Produce packs anti-inflammatory nutrients, or plant-based chemicals including antioxidants, that have been found to lower the risk for disease (see the Nutrition Corner for more dietary tips).
- **Move your body.** Studies show that exercise reduces inflammation, which, in turn, can significantly lower cancer and other health risks.
- **Boost your mood.** People who are anxious or depressed can lower their inflammation risk simply by getting professional treatment. Meditation, yoga, deep breathing or simply walking can be effective stress reducers.
- **Mind your meds.** Aspirin is an anti-inflammatory and taking one daily - after consulting with your doctor - can keep the blood's platelets from clotting. If you've already been prescribed a cholesterol-lowering med- there is another benefit: they may reduce inflammation, as well as your risk for heart disease.
- **Get some shut-eye.** A lack of sleep leads to everything from weight gain, heart disease and—yes—inflammation. Get 7+ hours of sleep each night.

## Total Lifestyle Counselor Saves a Life

Technology. We love to hate it. But for all the frustrations it may cause in our day-to-day lives, we should be forever grateful with the life-saving benefits it provides us.

Case in point. On July 4th, 2017, a recently widowed elderly man, "Paul", was home alone. On this day, his son would come and visit and take him out for a late lunch. It was going to be a good day. Paul is a diabetic. He is diligent about following the instructions of his Living Connected Total Lifestyle Coach and regularly tests his blood sugar using the Living Connected cellular-enabled glucose monitor. This device sends Paul's readings immediately to his coach and if the levels are out of range, an alert is sent to her for intervention. Beverly, Paul's Coach, received a critical notification that his blood glucose readings were very low and out of range. This alert triggered the following series of events.

Beverly immediately reached out by phone to Paul, initially there was no answer. On the fourth attempt, Paul answered but was disorientated. He told Beverly that he did not feel well because he had not eaten and needed food. Beverly tried to ascertain whether there was food in the house to which he replied that he did not know. Paul told Beverly that he needed help and asked her to come over. Beverly verified his address, summoned the local emergency response unit, then kept Paul engaged on the phone. Paul either set the phone down or became unresponsive as Beverly could not reengage him in conversation. Beverly made multiple attempts to call him back but the phone line remained busy.

Finally, Paul's son answered the phone and shared what happened. The paramedic team had already arrived at the house, had administered an IV and was providing the necessary help to bring his father's blood sugar readings and responsiveness back in line.

They both expressed their gratitude for the quick response that Beverly provided and her dedication to make sure that the appropriate help had been sent in time. Paul told his son "today, I almost died". They told Beverly that if it had not been for her concern and outreach - and the cellular glucose monitor - the outcome might have been tragic.



Your Total Lifestyle Coach (TLC) is your 'health advocate' - a GPS to help you navigate the complex healthcare map. Contact your TLC at (800) 386-5475 for personalized tools and resources to help you maintain your good health.