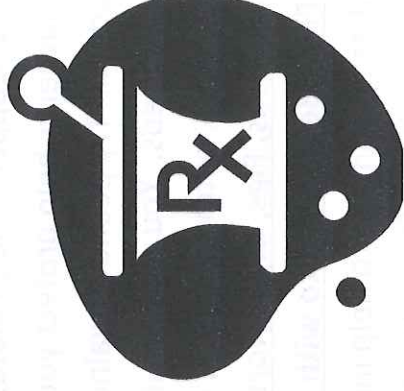


# FOOD AS MEDICINE



## INFLAMMATION

**Dark Cherries** – Eating about 20 whole cherries or drinking ½ cup of pure cherry juice can help decrease inflammation and alleviate joint and arthritic pain; try 1 cup fresh or frozen papaya to help with back pain and stiffness. Other anti-inflammatory foods include: **Shiitake**

**Mushrooms, Green Tea, Wild Caught Salmon, and Blueberries.** Also, the spice **Turmeric** which contains curcumin – the yellow pigment of the spice, has shown to have a comparable effectiveness as the drugs ibuprofen and hydrocortisone without the side effects. (Please note this has not been evaluated by the FDA.) In addition the polyphenols in **Extra Virgin Olive Oil** and **Avocado Oil** protect the heart and blood vessels from inflammation. Also **Broccoli and Cauliflower** contain phytonutrients such as sulforaphane, which helps remove carcinogenic compounds from the body which decreases the risk of tissue inflammation.

## DIGESTIVE ISSUES

**Probiotics** - What do you think of when you hear the word probiotics? Yogurt and similar foods contain **active and live cultures** which help support a healthy digestive system. These organisms which include lactic acid bacteria, yeasts, or a combination of both promote growth of healthy bacteria in the Gut and keep harmful bacteria to a minimum. What other foods are there besides yogurt? Kefir either dairy or non-dairy (made with sugared water, coconut water, or fruit juice) is used as a beverage or an addition to smoothies, sauces or other recipes. Other foods include natto (fermented soy), miso (soy, barley, rice, and grains), kimchi (cabbage, red pepper flakes, and other vegetables), tempeh (fermented soy), and sauerkraut – another version of kimchi but not as spicy.

## HEART DISEASE, HYPERTENSION, AND HEADACHES

Nuts and Seeds – ¼ cup of Nuts or 2 Tablespoons of nut butter per day is a great source of Vitamin E, Copper, Fiber, Folate, Omega-3 Fatty Acids, Magnesium, Potassium and Selenium. These nutrients help protect your heart, aid in managing blood pressure and lower risk for heart attack. Try peanuts, walnuts, Brazil nuts, almonds, cashews, pistachios, and sesame or sunflower seeds. You can also increase these nutrients by adding Ground Flax Seed to foods such as yogurt, oatmeal, soups, or smoothies. Magnesium is also found in Avocado, Banana, Black-Eye Peas, Figs, Great Northern Beans, Kidney Beans, Lentils, Lima Beans, Navy Beans, Okra, Pinto Beans, Potato with the Skin, Raisins, Soybeans, Spinach, Swiss Chard, and Yellow Beans has also shown to help individuals who have migraine headaches. Research has shown that people who suffer migraine headaches have low blood levels of magnesium and have shown success in resolving their headache pain, vision and hearing sensitivity, and nausea with magnesium treatment.

## STRESS, STRESS, AND MORE STRESS

Complex Carbohydrates such as whole wheat bread, cereals, pasta, oatmeal, brown rice increase serotonin levels in the brain which provides a “feel good” mood and helps stabilize blood sugar levels. The Vitamin C Rich Foods: Peppers, Kiwi, Citrus Fruits/Juices, Strawberries, Brussel Sprouts, Cantaloupe, Papaya, Broccoli, Greens, Peas, Potatoes, Tomato Juice, Pineapple, Mango, and Honeydew help lower the stress hormones, cortisol and adrenaline and strengthen the immune system. Studies show a quicker decrease in both stress hormone levels and blood pressure when an individual eats a Vitamin C rich food before participating in a stress-inducing event. Another nutrient which can help lower blood pressure and strengthen the immune system is Potassium. Potassium Rich Foods include Apricots, raw or dried, Avocado, Banana, Brussel Sprouts, Dates, Raisins, Prunes, Black, Kidney, Lima, Pinto, Red, Soy, or White Beans, Lentils, Cantaloupe, Honeydew, Kiwi, Oranges/Juices, Potato, Strawberries, and Sweet Potatoes. Other foods which contain potassium include Milk, Yogurt, Cottage and Ricotta Cheese. Dairy foods also help with stress as they contain calcium which is a nutrient shown to lower anxiety and mood swings. Calcium is a critical messenger for the regulation of most biological functions and systems, including hormones, muscles, and clotting. Low calcium intake can lead to mood swings, sleeplessness, and poor concentration all of which increase the stress on the body and the mind. So you can go from



this feeling:



to this feeling:

. If you are interested in learning more, please contact me: Carol E. Sweeney, MA, RD, LDN 610-888-7218.