

WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

An Inflammatory Situation

Inflammation is a normal and necessary part of the body's healing and repair process. When we have injuries or infections, our bodies release chemicals that trigger an immune response that sends help where it's needed. Under ideal circumstances, this process will usually last anywhere from a few hours to a few days.

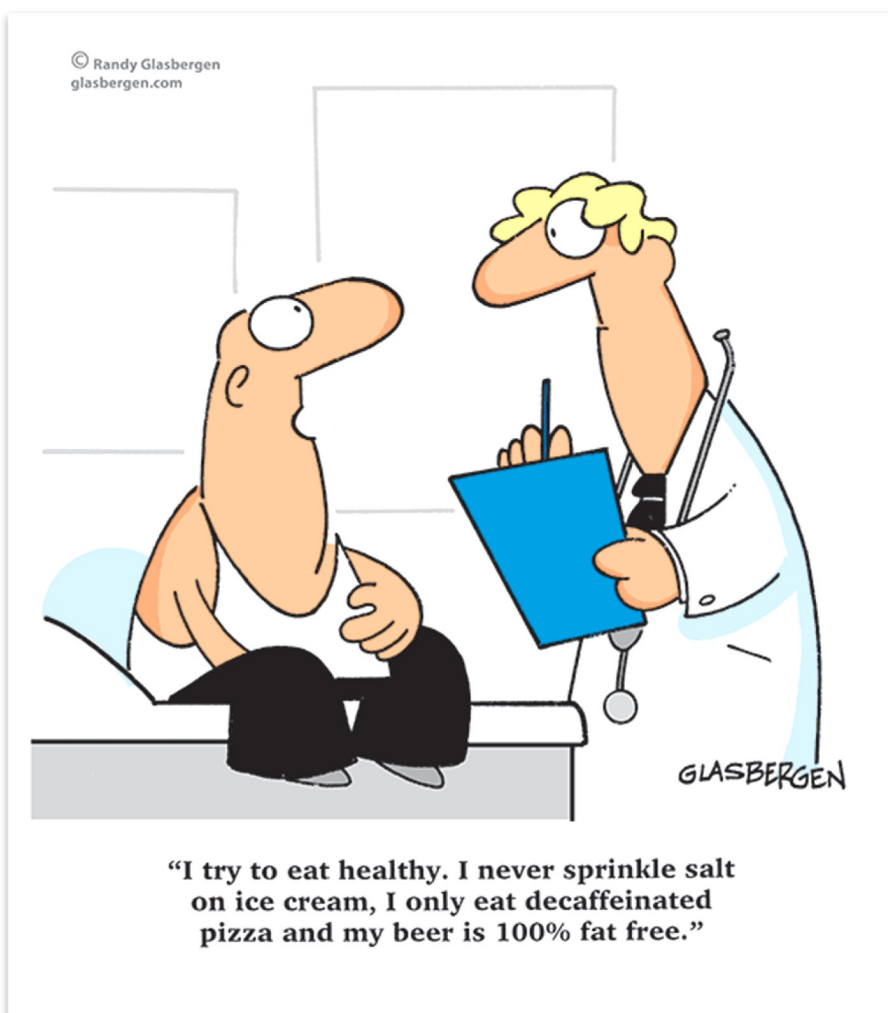
Inflammation is more of a problem when it becomes chronic, lingering at a lower level for a much longer period of time, without adequate resolution. Though we may not have obvious symptoms like pain, redness, and swelling, this kind of inflammation can still be very damaging to the body over time and is associated with long-term health conditions like heart disease, diabetes, cancer, obesity, and bowel diseases.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, many common foods promote chronic inflammation, like sugary foods, fried foods, and processed meats. Even the metabolic process of simply turning food into energy can create damaging particles in the body! The good news is that healthier food choices naturally protect the body and keep this process in balance—repairing what is needed, but not creating unnecessary long-term damage.

Diets centered around vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains, olive oil, and nuts are full of nutrients, like antioxidants, that neutralize damaging molecules in the body that can lead to chronic inflammation. Whole foods are also much better suited to normal digestion and assimilation, which makes us less likely to get bloodstream spikes in glucose and fatty acids, which can also create inflammatory conditions.

While improving dietary habits will go a long way toward resolving these issues, it's important to note that adequate exercise, sleep, and stress management are also crucial determinants for how healthy our inflammatory response will be.

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/anti-inflammatory-food-superstars-for-every-season-202111302648>



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