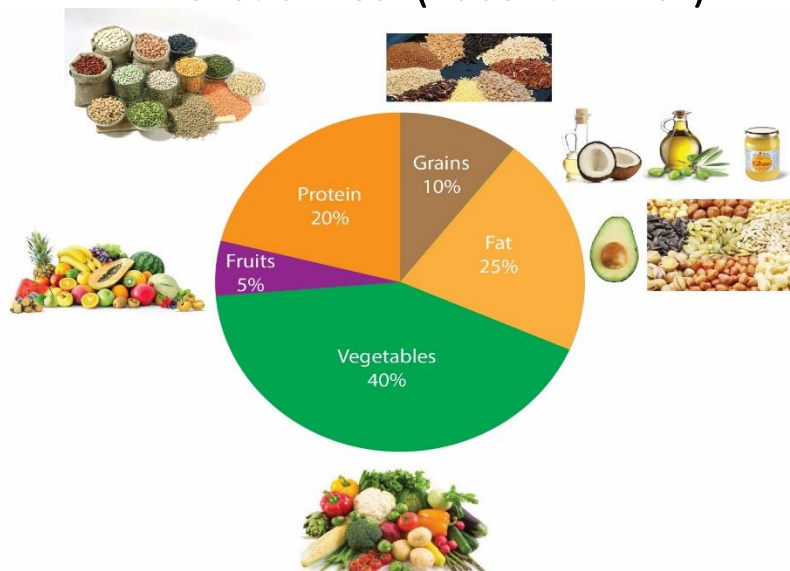


Meal Planning for an Anti-inflammatory Diet

An important aspect of meal planning is to consider:

- What to eat and what not to eat – Follow the guidelines outlined above and eliminate all the inflammatory foods.
- When to eat – Eat during 10-12 hours of the daylight. Never eat after 8 PM. Both digestion and metabolism slow down at night as digestive tract goes into rest, repair and rejuvenate mode. Eating after 8 PM causes Acid Reflux, bloating, indigestion, headache/migraine, and constipation. Additionally, during the late hours of night body has minimal need for energy, so the glucose absorbed from the late-night meal gets converted into fat. Late-night eating invariably leads to obesity, even if one is eating the most holistic food. It also disrupts deep rejuvenating sleep as it raises the core temperature by the diversion of blood flow to intestines for 2-3 hours (in Ayurveda called Jathar Agni). The deep sleep requires the core temperature to go down by one degree.
- How often to eat – Eat only 2-3 meals a day ensuring a gap of 12-14 hours between night meal and next morning meal and 5-7 hours between the day meals. This gap between the meals allows the body to use up reserve fat energy stored in the liver, around the abdominal organs (belly fat) and under the skin. Excess of unhealthy fat in the body organs - Lipotoxicity is most significant cause of inflammation and many diseases.
- Food Choices – Eat only the holistic natural foods of plant origin grown under the energy of the sun - Vegetables, fruits, lentils, legumes, seeds and nuts, cold compressed oils such as mustard, sesame, and coconut (4-6 teaspoons/day), and ghee (up to 2 - 3teaspoons/day),and finally, freshly ground spices.
- Minimize grain consumption and eliminate factory processed refined milled wheat flour for chapatis and making food products.
- Minimize the use of white sugar. Dark jaggery made from sugar cane, palm, and coconut is a healthy alternatives sweetener. Dark brown jaggery is also a source of minerals including iron and phosphate.
- Keep an appropriate balance of acidic and alkaline foods.

Holistic Meal (Paushtik Ahar)



Breakfast

- The ideal time for eating breakfast is the time when the digestion is at its best-between 9-11 AM.
- Start the day with sugar-free anti-inflammatory drinks such as lemon ginger water or other calorie-free beverages (outlined in the Recipe section)
- 1-2 cups of mixed fruit with nuts – Almond (7-10) and walnuts(3-5)or few peanuts soaked overnight. Adding the nuts adds to omega3 healthy fats which slow the stomach emptying time, minimizing food cravings.
- Half cup Sprouts (Moong, Methi, Peanuts with skin intact, chana) – Preferably eat raw or minimally cooked to preserve Vitamin B complex. Start with a small amount first and then build up the amount up to a half cup or little bowl/day. Add desired condiments, fresh coriander or mint and lemon juice to enhance the taste. For those with weak teeth coarsely grind like chutney with desired spices and lemon juice.
- Minimize grain consumption and use only the whole or coarsely ground grains. Eat-in, the cultural tradition, avoid western-style ready-made breakfast options like cereals, bread, muffins, waffles, pastries, etc. Each Slice of white or wheat bread is equivalent to 4-5 spoons of sugar, and a Mumbai pav bread is even higher in the refined sugar content up to 6-8 spoons of sugar-based on its size.
- When making Upma, use cracked wheat or Quinoa grain instead of semolina. Use vegetables and nuts generously when making Upma or Poha, so the amount of grain (carbohydrates) is reduced.
- When making porridge/Dalia use cracked wheat or steel-cut oats and not commercial instant rolled oats or quacker oats which are precooked and high glycemic value. Use dates or dark jaggery as a sweetener instead of white sugar.

Lunch/ Dinner (Main meals)

Eat smart considering the above options of what to eat and what not to eat. Minimize grain consumption as much as possible and eliminate refined milled wheat chapatti flour and bread from the diet.

- *Start with a bowl of mixed salad as a meal starter* this should include 3-4 seasonal vegetables of choice, 2-3 seasonal fruits, 2-3 kinds of seeds and nuts (sunflower, chia, flax, sesame and melon seeds. The flax and sesame seeds have harder skin and are difficult to

chew and digest when eaten as a whole. It is better to coarsely grind these seeds into a powder and sprinkle it over the salad to enhance the flavor. It is not a good idea to roast the seeds and nuts as cooking at high heat causes loss of essential omega 3 oils. The seed powder should be placed in a glass bottle and stored in the refrigerator in small batches to last up to a month. Use lemon juice or apple cider vinegar and sesame oil as a dressing with desired condiments – cumin powder, black pepper, sea salt or pink salt. Apple cider vinegar one tablespoon daily help with digestion and in lowering the blood sugar. Sesame oil is far superior in the nutritional value as compared to imported olive oil; considering 90% olive oil available in India is refined vegetable oil. Eating salad as a meal starter significantly minimizes the need for grains. Additional raw vegetables are a rich source of micronutrients and cleansing antioxidants.

- *One to two vegetables of choice* – Cook in cold compressed oils of different varieties (Mustard, Sesame and Coconut). If you wish to fry use coconut or mustard oil or filtered peanut oil. Biodiversity in food provides the body with all necessary nutrients, minerals, and vitamins.
- Do not pressure cook the vegetables (that includes root vegetables like potatoes) to preserve the essential nutrients. Pressure cooking potatoes and starchy vegetables convert complex starches into easily absorbed sugars raising their glycemic index.
- *One cup of Lentils and Legumes of all varieties/ day* – Eat all different kinds over a week. Biodiversity is the key to preventing nutritional deficiency.
- *Eat chapatis or Roti made from a variety of grains to minimize wheat content* – Do not consume store-bought packaged milled wheat flour which is lacking in fiber (husk or choker) and endosperm; both elements are a good source of B complex vitamins and the anti-inflammatory omega 3 oils.
- *Rice* – Small amounts of rice, is a healing grain for digestive health. A smart way to eat rice is to add 1-2 tablespoons of rice to a bowl of lentil/legume soup (dal), rather than pouring dal into a plateful of rice. Always add a healthy fat like ghee, sesame oil or coconut oil to rice and dal mix to slow down the absorption of starch sugar. Boiled rice without ghee and oil is high glycemic.
- *Eat a half-cup of yogurt (curd) or better still buttermilk (thin lassi)* – To make curds alkaline make vegetables raita with- cooked spinach or a variety of vegetables and crushed mustard seeds. Similarly make lassi with curry leaves, ginger, mint, and fresh coriander which are rich sources of disease-fighting antioxidants.
- *Freshly made pickles* – Use vegetables, ginger, turmeric, freshly ground mustard seeds, methi seeds. Both turmeric and ginger are well known anti-inflammatory foods.
- *Always eat mindfully and slowly* – Eat only when hungry, space the meals as outlined above, and eat slowly. It takes brain 20-30 minutes to get the signal that the stomach is full. Eating a meal in a hurry always leads to overeating.