

THE FOUNDATION HEALTH FORUM

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SAFER CURES FOR YOUR PAIN AND INFLAMMATION

Dear Health Conscious Reader,

If you suffer from chronic pain or inflammation, you may have had a roller-coaster ride lately. A few years ago, we had a lot of excitement about a new type of drugs called COX-2 inhibitors. Some examples include Vioxx, Celebrex, and Bextra. We thought they would relieve pain and inflammation without damaging your stomach. For years, this has caused problems for people taking drugs like aspirin and Advil.

Yet it turned out that these new drugs are not any safer than the traditional pain relievers. They can still cause the same stomach problems like ulcers and internal bleeding. Even worse, we've recently learned that COX-2 inhibitors like Vioxx dramatically increase your risk of having a heart attack or stroke.



If you are wondering where to turn next, there's good news. You don't have to risk a heart attack – or trash your stomach – to stop the pain. There are safer, proven alternatives that will not only relieve your pain but can actually *help restore damaged joints to health*. And instead of increasing your risk of a heart attack, these alternatives can actually help to reduce your risk of heart disease, Alzheimer's, and cancer.

How can arthritis therapies reduce cancer and Alzheimer's disease?

Studies show that inflammation plays a big part in many diseases. People who take aspirin and ibuprofen for arthritis pain have a lower risk for some diseases. They show a lower risk for Alzheimer's, heart disease, and some cancers.

Drug	Cost for Brand	30 days	Pros	Cons
TRADITIONAL OVER THE COUNTER				
Aspirin	Bayer Excedrin	\$18-34	Reduces inflammation and pain; long-term use may decrease risk of heart disease, stroke, Alzheimer's disease and certain cancers	Can irritate the stomach lining, cause ulcers, anemia, and internal bleeding
Ibuprofen	Advil Motrin	\$4-\$22		
Naproxyn	Aleve	\$3-\$9		
COX-2 INHIBITORS				
Rofecoxib	Vioxx	\$86-\$125	Reduces pain and inflammation; may last longer than over-the-counter medications	Elevated risk of heart attack or stroke
Celecoxib	Celebrex	\$129-257		
Valdecoxib	Bextra	\$89-\$179		

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These over-the-counter drugs are cheap and effective. But there's a problem with aspirin and ibuprofen. They can eat up your stomach; especially when you take them long-term, like arthritis sufferers do.

These drugs work by blocking a group of enzymes called cyclo-oxygenases (or COX). Some COX enzymes play a key role in the inflammatory process. When you block them, you reduce inflammation. But COX enzymes do other things as well, such as protect the lining of the stomach. That's why aspirin and ibuprofen (which block the action of COX enzymes) can cause gastrointestinal problems.

The idea behind Vioxx and the other COX-2 inhibitors was to block the specific COX enzymes that are responsible for inflammation (the COX-2 enzymes) – and leave the rest of the COX enzymes alone. It appeared to be a good strategy, but in the end, the new drugs were not the breakthrough we hoped for. In fact, they turned out to be deadly. Now it appears that thousands died from taking these new, supposedly "safer" arthritis drugs.

Here's some good news: You don't need toxic drugs. You can get rid of pain and inflammation naturally. These alternatives are safe and inexpensive.

Let food be your medicine

Drugs can be useful – even life-saving tools. But at the Wellness Research Foundation, we believe that drugs should be used a last resort. The first step is to try the healing power of wholesome foods and a healthy diet. And particularly with inflammation, eating the right foods can make an enormous difference.

Your cells can make both inflammatory and anti-inflammatory chemicals. How much of the various compounds are produced depends a lot on the foods you eat. Certain foods lead your body to produce more compounds that are inflammatory. Other foods lead your

body to generate anti-inflammatory compounds. When you know which foods are which, you can use this to your advantage.

To find the foods that fight inflammation and wipe out pain, use the IF Rating system. It tells you which foods raise or lower inflammation. Foods with a negative rating are inflammatory and foods with a positive rating are anti-inflammatory. For more information, go to www.inflammationfactor.com.

The table at the bottom of the page shows some of the highest-rated foods. (From *The Inflammation-Free Diet*, by Monica Reinagel.)

Spice it up

Plants and herbs also help with pain and inflammation. Studies show that these plants relieve pain and increase range of motion.² Some examples are: rosemary, oregano, garlic, and onions. Ginger, turmeric (the main spice in curry powder), and chili peppers are even more powerful.³

We now know that these spices work by naturally inhibiting the COX-2 enzymes. Vioxx and Celebrex are also COX-2 inhibitors. But nature's COX-2 inhibitors are much safer. Natural COX-2 inhibitors eliminate pain with none of the deadly risks or side effects.

You can get the inflammation-fighting benefits of these herbs and spices simply by including more of them in the foods you eat. If you enjoy Chinese, Indian, and Latin food, you are in luck. These cuisines feature plenty of ginger, curry, garlic, and chili peppers!

Replace dangerous drugs with healing nutrients

Some of the best foods to ease your pain are cold-water fish like salmon, tuna, sardines, herring and mackerel. They all contain omega-3 fatty acids. This is the good kind of fat that naturally reduces inflammation.

Foods that promote inflammation	Replacements to reduce inflammation
Refined carbohydrates. These include anything made with flour or sugar (white bread, pasta, rolls, pastry, cakes, cookies, sweets, candy, soda and juice drinks, breakfast cereals, etc.)	Natural carbohydrates, such as fruits, vegetables and legumes.
Saturated fats, including fatty cuts of meat, and commercial fat dairy products.	Mono-unsaturated fats, including olive oil and canola oil.
Trans fats, which are found in fried foods, snacks, margarine, mayonnaise, and any packaged food that contains <i>hydrogenated</i> or <i>partially-hydrogenated</i> oils.	Foods that contain omega-3 fatty acids, such as wild-caught salmon, tuna, herring, sardines, and mackerel.
White produce and processed foods, which tend to be anti-oxidant poor.	Brightly colored vegetables and fruits, which tend to be high in antioxidants.

BEST FOOD CHOICES

FRUITS

Guava
Strawberries
Cantaloupe
Lemon, lime
Rhubarb
Raspberries
Pink grapefruit

VEGETABLES

Spinach
Greens, including kale, collards, turnips and mustard greens
Sweet potato
Carrots
Garlic
Onions, including scallions and leeks
Chili peppers

DAIRY PRODUCTS

Low fat cottage cheese
Low fat plain yogurt
Low fat milk

FISH

Herring
Mackerel (not King)
Salmon (not farmed)

Tuna
Sardines

POULTRY

Goose
Duck

MEAT

BEEF
Pot roast
Beef shank
Top blade
Eye of round
Flank steak
Sirloin tip
Prime rib
Skirt steak
PORK
Pork rib chop
Pork tenderloin
LAMB
Lamb shanks

BREADS

Mixed-grain bread
Pumpernickel bread
Rye bread
Whole wheat bread

PASTA AND GRAINS

Barley
Whole wheat pasta
Kasha

FATS AND OILS

Safflower oil (high oleic)
Hazelnut oil
Olive oil
Canola oil
Avocado oil
Almond oil
Apricot kernel oil

BEVERAGES

Carrot juice
Tomato juice
Black or green tea
Club soda/Seltzer
Herbal tea
Non-alcoholic wine
Spring water

Omega-3s come in supplement form, too. Taking them in the form of fish oil capsules, or the oil itself, can be as effective as medications in reducing joint pain. Studies from the University of Pittsburgh showed 60% of patients with neck and lower-back pain got significant pain relief from fish oil supplements. Seven in ten were able to stop using medications altogether.⁴

Fish oil supplements are free of the side effects and risks that accompany traditional drugs and COX-2 inhibitors. They also cost 50 to 100% less than pharmaceutical arthritis medications. But the good news doesn't end there.

The American Heart Association supports the use of fish oil.

Supplementing with fish oil can:

- Reduce the incidence of heart attack and stroke
- Lower triglyceride levels
- Reduce high blood pressure
- Slow the progression of clogged arteries
- Reduce arrhythmias⁵

Years of research show that it's also helpful with:

- Psoriasis
- Asthma
- Lupus
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Inflammatory bowel disease

The recommended dosage is one to three grams in capsule form. Or you can take a tablespoon of good old-fashioned cod liver oil.

Foods high in antioxidants and other vitamins can reduce inflammation. Even small amounts of vitamins C and D reduce arthritis pain and the progression of osteoarthritis.^{6, 7} A multi-vitamin is a good way to fill in the gaps. It will cover your vitamin needs each day.

Herbs that naturally reduce inflammation

Here is a list of herbs you can use in supplement form, as natural alternatives to drugs. They also work by blocking the COX-2 enzymes but are cheaper and far safer to take on an ongoing basis.

GINGER ROOT has a long history in China and India. It cuts the production of inflammatory compounds and eases pain. It's safe and won't damage the stomach lining. Ginger also protects against stomach ulcers.⁸ The recommended dose is 1 to 2 grams per day.

STINGING NETTLE LEAF is an old remedy with scientific backing. Like ginger, it reduces inflammation. It is regularly prescribed in Germany as a treatment for arthritis and other inflammatory conditions. The recommended dosage is one to two grams per day.

HOLY BASIL comes from the East Indies and is widely used as a traditional Ayurvedic medicine. One of the key active compounds in holy basil is something called ursolic acid. It is a natural COX-2 inhibitor. Researchers report that an

FIGHT PAIN AND INFLAMMATION SAFELY

Supplement	Description	What it does	Dosage
Omega 3 Fatty Acids	In fat derived from cold water fish	Reduces inflammation and pain, increases joint mobility	1,000 to 3,000 mg daily
Ginger Root	Native to tropic and semi-tropic regions	Blocks inflammatory compounds; desensitizes pain receptors, protects against ulcer	1,000 to 2,000 mg daily
Stinging Nettle	Grows wild throughout U.S. and Europe	Interrupts inflammatory cascade by blocking production of inflammatory compounds	1,000 to 2,000 mg daily
Holy Basil	Herb native to East Indies and Asia	Blocks COX-2 enzymes, prevents production of inflammatory chemicals	Whole herb, ad lib

extract of holy basil is comparable to aspirin compounds in its inflammation-reducing effects. You can use it as a whole herb in cooking or find it as a supplement.

There are many safe and effective ways to naturally wipe out your joint pain. You just don't need expensive and dangerous drugs like Vioxx.

Sometimes, simply eating the right foods can help. The ones outlined here can help reduce your risk of heart disease, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and other chronic conditions – safely and with no side effects.

To Your Good Health,
The Staff of the Wellness Research Foundation

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