

# WHY FOOD MATTERS

## FUELLING THE FIRE:



Diet can be an important part of chronic pain self-management. Healthy eating can benefit people with chronic pain by:

- Reducing fatigue and improve energy levels
- Decreasing inflammation within your body
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Reducing the risk of (or help improve) certain diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, some cancers, and heart disease

### 5 GENERAL PRINCIPALS of Eating Healthy

# 1

#### **Avoid refined sugars**

Eg. candy, chocolate, pop, baked goods, etc.

# 2

#### **Ensure adequate hydration**

Amount depends on activity level, size, and existing health conditions, but most people need at least 2 liters daily.

# 3

#### **Increase non-starchy vegetable intake**

Aim for half of your plate at each meal to consist of non-starchy vegetables. Eg. Leafy greens (spinach, kale, etc.), broccoli, cauliflower, zucchini, brussel sprouts, bok choy, etc.

# 4

#### **Include a range of healthy fats**

Eg. Fatty fish (ie. salmon, mackerel, etc.), olive oil, nuts and seeds (ie. almonds, walnuts, pumpkin seeds).

# 5

#### **Avoid foods that make you feel bad**

Eg. Things that you know trigger pain flare ups, bloating, constipation or loose stools, etc. Common food sensitivities include refined sugars, breads/wheat-based products, dairy.

## KEY POINTS



There is no “chronic pain diet”.



Consider nutrition as a lifestyle change rather than a temporary regimen.



There is no “one size fits all” approach.

## TIPS FOR healthy eating on a budget



Buy fresh fruits and vegetables when in season.



Cook at home when possible.



Make extra meals and buy frozen vegetables to store in the freezer.



Use meat alternatives like dried beans, peas, lentils for some meals.



Plan ahead and make a list. Stick to your shopping list!



Plan your meals based on the sales, look at flyers or phone apps like FLIPP.



Purchase no name brands or store brands.



Eat before you shop. This prevents impulse buying and unhealthy food choices.

## LEARN MORE about healthy diets

Harvard Healthy Eating Plate: [www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-eatingplate](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-eatingplate)

EAT-Lancet Commission Summary Report:

[www.eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/eat-lancetcommission-summary-report](http://www.eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/eat-lancetcommission-summary-report)

Canada's Food Guide: [www.food-guide.canada.ca/en](http://www.food-guide.canada.ca/en)

## RESOURCES for recipes

*The Anti-Inflammatory Diet & Action Plans* by Dorothy Calimeris & Sondi Bruner

*The Oh She Glows Cookbook* by Angela Liddon (plant-based recipes)

[www.AllRecipes.com](http://www.AllRecipes.com) (database of thousands of different recipes)

[www.ChocolateCoveredKatie.com](http://www.ChocolateCoveredKatie.com) (healthy dessert recipes)

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