



# What You Should Know About Inflammation!

*The difference between the inflammation that heals you and the inflammation that hurts you*

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*Inflammation has an image problem. In reality, it is a normal, necessary immune response, and the story only gets complicated when it does not turn off on schedule.*

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Acute inflammation heals; chronic inflammation, left unchecked, drives ongoing pain.
- Chronic inflammation is linked to poor sleep, stress, and metabolic disease, not just injury.
- Diet, exercise, sleep, and targeted treatment help bring an overactive response back to a healthy baseline.

## THE FULL PICTURE

Acute inflammation is the swelling, redness, and warmth that shows up after an injury or infection. It is the body sending resources to repair damage, and it typically resolves within days to a few weeks as healing completes. This kind of inflammation is doing its job, and suppressing it too aggressively can sometimes slow healing rather than help it.

Chronic inflammation is different. It occurs when that same immune response stays switched on long after the original injury has healed, or in response to ongoing stressors like poor sleep, prolonged stress, autoimmune conditions, or metabolic disease. This lingering inflammatory state is strongly linked to persistent joint and back pain, and it can make an already sensitized nervous system even more reactive.

Managing chronic inflammation usually involves a combination of approaches: anti-inflammatory diet patterns, consistent low-impact exercise, adequate sleep, weight management where relevant, and targeted medical treatments when indicated.

The goal is not to eliminate inflammation entirely, since some of it is protective, but to bring a chronically overactive response back down to a healthy baseline.

*This handout is for general patient education and does not replace individualized medical advice. Discuss your specific diagnosis and treatment options with your physician.*

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