What is inflammation?

Inflammation is a natural reaction the body has to trauma or harmful stimuli directly affecting the body. The stimuli can include damaged cells (a cut), irritants (bug bite) or pathogens (cold or flu virus). The act of inflammation itself is actually the body working to complete the healing process. However, there is another form of inflammation called systemic inflammation. This form is chronic and takes place inside the body. It is impacted by health behaviors which play a role in disease and aging. Some of these effects include but are not limited to: heart disease, diabetes, cancer, depression, Alzheimer’s, osteoporosis, etc.

Anti-Inflammatory Foods

- **Tomatoes**
- **Nuts**: Almonds, walnuts, and various other nuts.
- **Leafy greens**: Spinach, kale, collards, and more.
- **Seeds**: Chia seeds and flaxseeds.
- **Fruits**: Strawberries, blueberries, oranges, and cherries.
- **Olive oil**

Tips to Reduce Inflammation

- **Maintain a tobacco free lifestyle**
- **Limit excessive alcohol consumption**
- **Maintain a healthy weight** - Excess weight is a big contributor to increase inflammation. Ask your physician about what a healthy weight looks like for you.
- **Keep your body moving with regular exercise** - At least 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise each week
- **Limit or manage stress** in healthy ways
- **Nutritional changes** - A change in diet can make one of the biggest impacts on lowering inflammation. See the visuals on this page for guidance.

Foods to Avoid

- Processed meats
- Sodas
- Fried foods
- Refined carbohydrates

“Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out.”

- Robert Collier
  (American author of self-help)