



CHECK IN

with Dr. Ruby Gill

LET'S CHECK UP ON... FOOD IS MEDICINE: THE INFLAMMATORY VS. ANTI-INFLAMMATORY DIET

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How much does diet really matter when it comes to disease reversal or remission?

The answer is: far more than most people realize.

Nutrition influences the body at a cellular level—down to how food is grown, prepared, combined, cooked and stored. Diet is not simply fuel; it is biochemical information. When nutrients are combined thoughtfully, they can work synergistically, much like an alchemy that promotes healing. When combined poorly—or sourced and cooked improperly—they can quietly drive inflammation, oxidative stress and chronic disease.

Your diet can be pro-inflammatory, or it can be anti-inflammatory. That distinction is life-changing.

In clinical practice, I often see patients who believe they are eating “healthy”—high protein, frequent exercise, minimal sugar—yet continue to struggle with metabolic disease, inflammation, autoimmune symptoms, mood disorders or fatigue. What's frequently overlooked is *what* that protein is, *how* it's prepared, and *what else* is coming along with it.

Hidden contributors include advanced glycation end products (AGEs), lipid peroxides, trimethylamine-N-oxide (TMAO), carcinogenic compounds formed through high-heat cooking, artificial sweeteners such as sucralose, and refined industrial seed oils. These compounds quietly promote insulin resistance, endothelial dysfunction, immune dysregulation and chronic inflammation.

Unfortunately, nutrition education remains limited in traditional medical training. Meanwhile, the Standard American Diet, aptly abbreviated SAD, has acted as a silent accelerant to rising rates of obesity, cardiovascular disease, cancer, neuroinflammatory conditions, autoimmune illness and mood disorders.

SO WHICH DIET IS BEST?

Patients often ask which diet is “right.” The honest answer is, it depends on your medical history and goals. However, across populations and disease states, one dietary pattern consistently rises to the top—the **Mediterranean diet**.

The Mediterranean dietary pattern is among the most extensively studied nutritional frameworks in modern medicine. Large, randomized trials have demonstrated improvements in systolic blood pressure, lipid profiles, insulin sensitivity and inflammatory markers such as C-reactive protein. It has also been associated with reductions in cardiovascular events, cancer risk and neurodegenerative disease.

Other dietary frameworks, such as the autoimmune protocol (AIP) diet or structured anti-inflammatory diets, can be highly effective for select patients. Yet the Mediterranean diet remains the most broadly beneficial, adaptable and sustainable approach long term.

WHY PREPARATION MATTERS AS MUCH AS FOOD CHOICE

How food is prepared matters just as much as what is eaten. High-heat cooking methods such as frying, grilling, or charring can degrade nutrients and generate mutagenic and carcinogenic byproducts. Steaming, sautéing at lower temperatures and gentle roasting preserve nutrient integrity and minimize

oxidative stress.

I also encourage patients to store and reheat food in glass or stainless-steel containers rather than plastic, reducing exposure to endocrine-disrupting compounds during reheating.

PRACTICAL ANTI-INFLAMMATORY NUTRITION PRINCIPLES

- Fill **half your plate** with vegetables at each meal
- Prioritize **steaming or low-heat cooking methods**
- Choose **organic produce** when possible; if not, avoid the “dirty dozen” and wash produce with vinegar and water
- Aim for at least **2 liters of water daily**
- Avoid **high-fructose corn syrup** and **refined soybean oil**, major contributors to excess omega-6 intake
- Increase **omega-3 fatty acids** to support immune and neurologic balance
- Individuals with autoimmune or allergic conditions often benefit from a **plant-forward dietary pattern** and avoiding excessive protein

DIET, INFLAMMATION, AND DISEASE OUTCOMES

Clinical trials demonstrate that patients following a Mediterranean-style diet experience significantly higher remission rates for depression compared to those receiving lifestyle counseling alone. Benefits have also been observed in conditions such as ADHD, PTSD and migraines, conditions increasingly linked to neuroinflammation and metabolic dysfunction.

Even how we eat matters. Research shows that slowing meals to at least 15 minutes reduces post-prandial inflammation and improves metabolic signaling.

Meaningful biochemical changes take time. Most studies demonstrate measurable improvements in inflammatory markers after approximately **12 weeks** of dietary consistency. This is not a short-term cleanse; it is a metabolic recalibration.

THE BROADER IMPLICATION

The science is clear: food is medicine. Nutrition influences the same inflammatory, metabolic and immune pathways targeted by many medications, yet dietary interventions are rarely studied head-to-head against pharmaceutical therapies. If more drug research allowed comparisons between **dietary intervention versus pill** rather than **placebo versus pill**, we would likely see a far healthier society. What matters most is specificity, routine and consistency.

An effective anti-inflammatory dietary pattern emphasizes extra-virgin olive oil, walnuts, monounsaturated fats, omega-3 polyunsaturated fats, vegetables, fiber, legumes, whole grains, anti-inflammatory spices and lean, high-quality protein. Long-term adherence has been associated with up to a **31 percent reduction in cancer risk** and improved metabolic signaling, including increased endogenous GLP-1 production.

Your future health is shaped daily—one plate at a time. •

Schedule your integrative medicine consultation with Dr. Ruby Gill today! Take the first step toward thriving again with personalized, evidence-based care tailored to your unique needs. Let Dr. Gill help you reclaim your health, confidence, and joy!



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