



Lifespan

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Lifespan Lyme Disease Center

DIET FOR LYME DISEASE TREATMENT

There is not a standard diet recommendation for treating Lyme disease, but there are foods you could eat that would likely improve physical symptoms and your overall health. *Eating a diet that would minimize oxidation and inflammation could be of benefit.* We cannot stop oxidation as it occurs from breathing in oxygen, but you can certainly minimize it with diet. Excess oxidation increases the risk of all chronic diseases and aging and will also increase inflammation.

Foods that would increase oxidation and inflammation:

(TRY TO AVOID)

- Vegetable seed oils and foods made with them. These would-be soybean, safflower, and corn oil, and margarine, salad dressing, and mayonnaise. These foods are high in polyunsaturated fats, which easily oxidize. Canola oil would not increase oxidation, but it would also not improve inflammation.
- Red meat or beef. This would be all cuts of beef, including all ground beef (hamburger, cheeseburger, meatloaf, meat balls, American Chop Suey, meat chili, etc.). There is a polyunsaturated fat found in red meat (arachidonic acid) that would increase oxidation.
- Being overweight increases the inflammation in your body. Losing weight with a healthy diet and keeping it off will help to decrease inflammation.

Foods that will decrease oxidation and inflammation:

(USE FOODS RICH IN PHENOL OLEOCANTHAL & SALICYLIC ACID)

- Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) is the juice of the olive and has been related to improving many risk factors for chronic diseases. By definition, all EVOO is first pressed and cold pressed. EVOO is mainly monounsaturated fat, so it does not easily oxidize, and it naturally has a number of antioxidants and daily use has been shown to decrease oxidation. The health benefits of EVOO are from the phenols that are found in all EVOO. Some types of olive oil are rich in the phenol oleocanthal, which is a natural anti-inflammatory agent. Olive oil made from the Koroneki, Mission, Coratina, or Picholine olives are higher in oleocanthal content compared to other olives. The health benefits of EVOO start at 2 tablespoons a day. The best way to use EVOO is with vegetables. A good rule of thumb is 1 tablespoon of EVOO per cup of vegetables.

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- Some fruits and vegetables are high in salicylic acid, a component found in aspirin, which can help decrease inflammation. The following is a list of these foods:
 - **Fruits:** Apricots, berries (blackberry, blueberry, boysenberry, cranberry, loganberry, raspberry, strawberry), cantaloupe, cherries, grapes (and raisins), oranges, pineapple, plum (and prunes).
 - **Vegetables:** Broccoli, cucumber, green peppers, okra, radishes, spinach, sweet potatoes, processed tomatoes (all tomato products including ketchup and tomato sauce), and zucchini.

A serving is ½ a cup of vegetables or fruit (which is quite small if you like vegetables and not too much if you do not); ¼ cup tomato sauce; 1 cup of salad greens; or ½ a cup or ½ a piece of fruit (so a piece of fruit is 2 servings). The goal would be nine servings of fruits and vegetables per day. This can easily be done if you had a piece of fruit at breakfast and lunch, then a 2 cup salad with lunch and 1 ½ cup of vegetables at dinner. Do not forget that tomato sauce counts as a vegetable and it is high in salicylic acid.
