

Diet Change Reduces Pain



By reducing consumption of omega-6-fatty acids and increasing intake of omega-3-fatty acids, chronic pain may be reduced, according to the research. The authors also discovered that skin levels of omega-6-fats were linked with pain levels and the necessity for pain-reducing medications.

Here are easy ways to make a switch to healthier fats and a more nutrient-dense diet. These steps will help lower the consumption of refined omega-6 fatty acids:

<input type="radio"/>	Encourage nuts (including walnuts) as snacks in place of chips or sugary treats.
<input type="radio"/>	Add ground flax seeds to oats, yogurt, smoothies or salads.
<input type="radio"/>	Suggest “Fishy Friday” to encourage salmon and other fatty fish in their diets.
<input type="radio"/>	Swap French fries for baked or roasted potatoes.
<input type="radio"/>	Sprinkle chia seeds in homemade vinaigrette, marinade, oats, yogurt, and smoothies.
<input type="radio"/>	Add ground flax seeds to oats, yogurt, smoothies or salads.

Vegetable oils contain omega-6-fatty acids and do have some health benefits. However, these fats are often found in a Western diet in chips and French fries compared to omega-3-fatty acids found in fish, walnuts, and flaxseeds. These fats are also lurking in processed snacks, fast food, cured meats, cake, and other less than nutritious items.

According to a study out of The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, a high-fat, Western diet can impact the risk of painful conditions in individuals already dealing with diabetes and obesity. On the flip side, altering your diet may greatly reduce or reverse inflammatory pain from arthritis, trauma, surgery, or neuropathic pain related to diabetes. This evidence suggests that diet modification could help treat those with chronic pain or aid in the development of medications that reduce the release of pro-inflammatory chemicals in the body.

Reference: Jacob T. Boyd, Peter M. LoCoco, Ashley R. Furr, Michelle R. Bendele, Meilinn Tram, Qun Li, Fang-Mei Chang, Madeline E. Colley, Grace M. Samenuk, Dominic A. Arris, Erin E. Locke, Stephan B. H. Bach, Alejandro Tobon, Shivani B. Ruparel, Kenneth M. Hargreaves. Elevated dietary ω -6 polyunsaturated fatty acids induce reversible peripheral nerve dysfunction that exacerbates comorbid pain conditions. *Nature Metabolism*, 2021; 3 (6): 762 DOI: 10.1038/s42255-021-00410-x

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