

THE INFLAMMATION SITUATION

Inflammation is one of the body's main defense tools. When you get a cut or infection, inflammation helps you heal. But when inflammation stays switched "on" for too long, it becomes a slow, silent stressor that contributes to fatigue, joint discomfort, brain fog, and chronic disease risk.

DID YOU KNOW?

Diet plays a major role. Ultra-processed foods and low fiber eating patterns increase inflammatory pathways. In contrast, a Mediterranean-style pattern, colorful plants, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, and olive oils support antioxidant activity and reduce chronic inflammation.

Movement is powerful anti-inflammatory signal. A 2023 meta-analysis found that exercise training reduced C-reactive protein (CRP) and TNF-alpha in older adults (Magni et al., 2025). These changes support immune balance and tissue repair.

TNF-alpha: Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha is a proinflammatory cytokine that is produced by the immune cells and plays a crucial role in inducing inflammation and signaling apoptosis, programmed cell death.

CRP: C-reactive protein is a protein made by the liver and increases in response to inflammation in the body.

Stress and sleep also influence inflammation heavily. Chronic stress elevates cortisol, which disrupts immune signaling. Irregular or insufficient sleep increases inflammatory proteins and reduces recovery capacity. Gentle practices like deep breathing, time outside, stretching, or journaling help shift the body into repair mode.

You don't need dramatic changes.

Think "small daily offsets," one extra vegetable, a 10-minute walk, or 5 minutes of slow breathing. These small acts lower inflammation over time.

Magni, O., Arnaoutis, G. & Panagiotakos, D. The impact of exercise on chronic systemic inflammation: a systematic review and meta-meta-analysis. *Sport Sci Health* 21, 1405–1417 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11332-025-01445-3>