

Inflammation **ELIMINATOR**

17 Tissue-Toxic Foods
You Must Avoid



Inflammatory Foods

17 Tissue-Toxic Foods to Avoid

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INTRODUCTION

Eliminating chronic inflammation in the body is essential for optimal health. However, inflammation in and of itself is a defense response and an indispensable asset once kept in its rightful place.

Advice to curb the intake of inflammatory items like trans fat and alcohol is wise, as continuous, heavy, and long-term consumption can take a significant adverse toll.

However, when regulated and present in spurts, inflammation acts as a powerful agent needed to identify and eliminate harmful pathogenic or other damaging agents in the body—flushing out rogue elements from the systems to support healing and the regeneration of healthy living cells and tissues.

An inflammatory response in the body essentially rallies the immune system, altering blood flow and directing the resources of bodily fluids, proteins, and white blood cells to target the site of acute damage—to recover the health of cells in the affected tissue.

An acute inflammatory response, lasting a few days is beneficial in the healing process. Still, extended and chronic inflammation can lead to damage and disease over time, as oxidative stress can develop into conditions like arthritis, heart disease, and cancer.

Eating a low-carb, high-fat ketogenic diet eliminates bad actors like refined sugar and potatoes. However, there are ingredients with keto-friendly macros that you'll still want to avoid and eliminate from your diet for reasons we'll cover below.

#1 - Trans Fats



Saturated fats took the brunt of criticism for years, with the food industry promoting items like margarine and vegetable oils instead of real butter or cold-pressed coconut oil. However, trans fats are a variety of unsaturated fat linked to several adverse health outcomes, including the promotion of heart disease—the leading killer of adults in the US.

Creating hydrogenated oils is a highly-processed endeavor that utilizes chemicals to derive the end product, which attributes to its ability to inflame the body and cause subsequent damage to your living tissues and cells.

The Mayo Clinic notes that trans fats contribute to increased levels of bad cholesterol, or LDL, and lower healthy LDL levels, which is said to hamper coronary health, promoting the formation of plaques and diminishing function.

The unhealthy nature of trans fats is evident enough that the Food and Drug Administration has banned its use in products sold in the US. Still, it is wise to monitor ingredients in the foods you eat wisely as these items are insidious and sometimes found in things you would least expect.

Eliminate shortening, fried foods, artificial non-dairy creamers, and margarine products altogether to avoid these harmful fats.

#2 - Fully-hydrogenated Fats



Fully-hydrogenated fats (c12) are the sibling to trans fats, although more completely hydrogenated, as its name eludes.

Although fully hydrogenated fats contain fewer trans fatty acids, their creation usually includes cheaper quality, highly-processed oils, making them a subprime option for health-conscious keto dieters.

And using omega-6-rich oils like safflower, corn, cottonseed, and soybean oil, derived from genetically modified crops, triggers chronic inflammation and promotes a variety of ailments in those who consume them.

#3 - Grain-fed Meats



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Spending time in the keto community would signal that grass-fed and grass-finished meats are the darlings of dieters looking to dine on quality cuts. And there's a good reason for this bias as the foods eaten by the animals we eat significantly impact their nutritional profile.

Plus, most grain-fed meats also contain antibiotics and may be treated with chemicals when processing, which can transfer to people eating those foods, with a compounding effect causing lasting issues over time.

Although you may pay a little more and need to source grass-fed and grass-finished cuts of meat intentionally, the effort pays in many dividends to your health that are well worth it. Grass-fed beef contains significantly higher amounts of heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids, conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), and lower levels of monounsaturated fats than grain-fed meat—a much wiser option for anyone relying on animal cuts as a primary source of fat and protein while eating a ketogenic diet.

Plus, grass-fed beef tends to be more nutrient-dense, enabling you to get more nourishment while consuming fewer calories. And grass-fed cuts tend to offer higher levels of vitamins like A and E, along with other antioxidants that are incredibly beneficial to the body—a bonus for any conscious keto dieter.



4 - Processed Meats (AGEs)



Topping your keto pizza with savory pepperoni rounds or indulging in other cured cuts of meat like bacon are typical on a low-carb, high-fat diet. But it's essential to choose your processed meats wisely to avoid harmful additives like nitrites and nitrates—classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as carcinogenic, in the same class as tobacco and asbestos concerning cancer development.

Several meat preservation processes like smoking or curing, using nitrites and nitrates, can propagate cancer-causing compounds like N-nitroso. And you'll want to go out of your way to opt for selections by organic companies like Applegate Farms to avoid pesky pesticides and other toxic additives.

Plus, the consumption of ingredients like sodium nitrite and nitrate are associated with an increased risk of heart diseases and diabetes, along with other metabolic conditions, due to the cocktail of artificial chemicals found in lower-quality processed meat varieties.

And we'd be remiss if we didn't mention that consuming large amounts of these curated meats—as the centerpiece of your low-carb plan or any dietary protocol—can lead to an increased risk of chronic diseases and potentially even premature death.

We're not suggesting you eliminate all forms of processed and cured meats; they certainly have a hallowed place in the hearts of many following a high-fat diet. However, selecting premium varieties of these foods is essential to avoid added ingredients that could trigger chronic inflammation in the body, increasing risk of disease.

Also, animal products rich in fat and protein are usually abundant in advanced glycation end products (AGEs). And with elevated AGEs as a precursor to increased oxidative stress and inflammation—it seems worth noting that the opposite is typically found in low-glycemic vegetables, fruits, or dairy products, even when cooked. So be sure to pack your meal plan full of low-carb produce and other nutrient-dense, plant-based fare to limit the production of potentially harmful food-derived elements.

Furthermore, studies have documented a marked increased lifespan and reduced instances of conditions like atherosclerosis, insulin resistance, and vascular and kidney dysfunction with a diet limiting the body's exposure to AGEs and their subsequent deleterious compounds.

5 - Artificial Sweeteners



 KONSCIOUS

Eliminating sugar in the diet is an excellent step toward removing toxicity from the body, but abandoning the crystalized cane is not enough. The sugar substitutes we select play a significant role in our appetite, cravings, and overall health, as well—so choose wisely!

The initial draw of artificial sweeteners is understandable: they're void of calories, absent of sugar, and their macronutrient profile appears to be perfect for supporting weight loss.

But there are hidden dangers in these seemingly sweet substitutes, and it's advisable to opt for natural keto-friendly sweeteners like stevia or monk fruit, instead.

Notoriously questionable sweeteners like sucralose (found in Splenda) and aspartame present in Equal and NutraSweet can cause endocrine and other hormonal disruptions that increase food cravings, migraines, depression, digestive issues, and even promote weight gain.

While avoiding artificial sweeteners is advisable for several reasons, it's still possible to utilize substitutes for sugar to enjoy sweet treats while harnessing carb intake.

Several options like stevia, erythritol, allulose, and other creative blends are excellent alternatives—perfect for sweetening baked goods, hot beverages, and smoothies alike with zero aftertaste!

Plus, many sugar-free swaps, like the King Arthur Baking Sugar Alternative, work perfectly 1:1, so you can proceed with making your favorite confectionary keto recipes without any adjustments.

Stick to brands like Swerve, Lakanto, SweetDrops, and Sukrin to explore the many varieties of sweeteners available in their catalogs. These lines offer a bounty of options to enjoy, from granular and golden to confectioners and syrups.

Knowing which sweeteners to use can quickly make or break a keto dieter's experience. Imagine drinking a flat coffee or eating a cake without the sweetness we seek; keto would become a challenging program to maintain long-term.

Fortunately, the keto-friendly sweeteners available are vast and versatile, as we share in our in-depth guideline about which to use while following a low-carb, high-fat diet, to help keep life sweet—sans sugar.

6 - MSG (Liver Inflammation)



Lovers of MSG tout its ability to boost flavor, hence its presence in many affordable, fast foods—like Chinese food, canned foods, processed meats, and some soups. But several unfortunate symptoms are associated with a reaction to this chemical, known as MSG symptom complex, as follows:

- Headache
- Flushing
- Sweating
- Facial pressure or tightness
- Numbness, tingling, or burning in the face, neck, and other areas of the body
- Rapid, fluttering heartbeats (heart palpitations)
- Chest pain
- Nausea
- Weakness

Conflicting research is unclear regarding direct causation of the noted symptoms, save in those with a specific sensitivity or experiencing a reaction immediately following moderate to excessive consumption.

Regardless, avoid this ingredient to err on the side of caution, if anything. There are loads of other flavor enhancers like mushroom umami seasoning, miso, or any number of enhancements you can use to elevate flavor without the potential side effects you may experience with this additive.



#7 - Preservatives & Artificial Colors



Companies may elect to use artificial colors, flavors, and other additives and preservatives for the esthetic and as a method to extend their food products' shelf-life. However, these ingredients can cause several harmful effects in those who consume them and their offspring for many generations.

Take care to read labels to ensure that the vivid red and blue hues in your beverages derive from plant-based sources instead of the result of Yellow 6 and Red 40 or any other chemical concoction.

Source the most organic and natural foods possible and avoid artificial colors, preservatives, and other food products as a general rule to support short and long-term health. Plus, it's imperative to eliminate the consumption of artificial elements, with some studies revealing disturbing findings of how these food-based compounds negatively affect development and cellular health.

Plus, commonly used food dyes and preservatives may spike hyperactivity. And some pigments, and other additives, may even hinder cellular detoxification, which unnecessarily taxes the liver.

Also, yellow dyes, like tartrazine and sunset yellow, are xenoestrogens. They're hormone disruptors often found in packaged and processed foods. These dyes can arrest or thwart growth and development, particularly in children, with their use also associated with increased instances of breast cancer and liver disease in adults.

Furthermore, Yellow Dye No. 5 stunted the learning response in mice in one study, with the diminished response passed down through generations on an epigenetic level—with evidence of altered brain function, and increased anxiety and motor impairment conditions emerging in the subsequent progeny of an affected bloodline.

8 - Alcohol



Pairing a perfectly-seared rib-eye with your favorite glass of red vino won't likely compromise ketosis. However, it's essential to approach alcohol consumption mindfully to manage your macros and monitor your health on a ketogenic diet.

Limiting alcohol intake is wise for several reasons on a keto diet. Spirited libations contain empty calories, often lead to mindless eating, and drinking too many mojitos a week increases inflammation, linked with a higher risk of breast cancer in women.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) advises the consumption of two or less for men and one or fewer alcoholic drinks a day for women, on days when alcohol is consumed, as the 2020-2025 dietary guidelines for Americans.

Reserve alcohol for festivities with family and friends or in limited amounts to unwind after work, but keep an eye on portions and frequency to mitigate adverse effects.

9 - Omega-6s



KONSCIOUS

The battle of the healthy fats continues to rage on, and omega-6 fatty acids remain in the crosshairs of those engaged in the dietary debate.

Many in America who rely on packaged and processed foods heavily in their diets may, however, tip the intake scales to the point of triggering inflammation and its related health conditions because of the sheer volume of these foods they consume daily.

However, omega-6 fatty acid provides some benefits in lowering harmful LDL cholesterol and enhancing levels of heart-protective HDL, something to incorporate into the diet in the form of brain-boosting walnuts or sunflower seeds to diversify your fat intake profile. Just avoid the cheaper, processed foods with elevated levels.

Besides, many omega-3-rich foods contain naturally-occurring amounts of omega-6s, as well; the most crucial point is to focus on the source and quantity of omega-6 fats consumed to keep your body well-balanced.

Just steer clear of highly processed, fully or partially-hydrogenated oils like corn, safflower, or soybean to limit chemically-filled options known to incite chronic inflammation in the body.

10 - Gluten



 KONSCIOUS

The emergence of a plethora of products without it is enough to make one wonder what it is and whether you should be eating it.

Gluten is a protein found in wheat and other grain-based flours and is responsible for giving bread and other baked goods their elasticity and delightful, bouncy bite.

However, this food may not be permissible for you if you have Crohn's or Celiac Disease—or have a leaky gut or other personal food sensitivity.

Gluten is in obvious places like bread and cookies. Still, it can also appear in other food products you may not expect, like in condiments, so it's best to read ingredient lists carefully if you're sensitive to this commonly-used ingredient.

11 - Refined Carbohydrates



Eliminating carbs is a cornerstone principle of any low-carb, high-fat ketogenic diet. To this end, it's important to avoid simple and high-glycemic carbs as they spike blood sugar rapidly, lead to cravings, and can cause significant mood changes when eaten.

You're probably already eliminating these foods if you're following keto, but here's a quick list of refined carbohydrates to avoid when limiting sugars:

- Juice
- Starchy vegetables
- Sweetened yogurt
- Pasta
- Beer

Keep a close eye on macros when sourcing the foods mentioned to avoid brands with hidden sugars and other ingredients containing simple carbs that enter the system and drastically impact blood sugar levels rapidly.

12 - Fried Foods



Crispy, crunchy, fried foods are the favorites of many. Fried foods are comforting and can conquer any munchie craving in moments. But sourcing a healthy keto-friendly dredge and selecting the best oil to tolerate high-heat cooking is only part of the challenge for the conscious keto dieter.

Eating large amounts of fried foods, especially meats cooked in cheap hydrogenated oils like cottonseed and vegetable oil, creates carcinogenic compounds that increase the risk of cancer and heart disease, among other ailments.

Plus, fried foods are often brimming with bothersome trans fatty acids that contribute to the proliferation of lifestyle diseases like obesity and diabetes, so it's best to limit fried foods in your meal plan—opt primarily for baked, steamed, or broiled fare instead.

13 - Ready-to-Eat Meals



KONSCIOUS

Having heat-and-eat meals available in the fridge or freezer is a convenient way to support your meal prep efforts and adds variety to your diet throughout the week. But it's essential to select options with minimal preservatives and additives to avoid triggering inflammation.

Make sure to read ingredient and nutrition labels on all ready-to-eat meals and snacks to make sure they are truly keto-friendly.

Also, you may want to prepare single-servings of freezer-friendly dishes, like lasagna or chili, for the perfect homemade option to reheat and enjoy, even when dining solo.

Finally, cooking your food is a terrific way to closely monitor the amount and quality of the ingredients and macros in your meals. Use meal prep as an opportunity to fine tune your program and set yourself up for continued success.

14 - Personal Food Intolerances (e.g., eggs, wheat, soy, nuts, etc.)



Peanuts, and tree nuts, along with eggs and fish, top the list of the most common allergy-triggering foods. Despite their stellar keto macros, there are quite a few keto-friendly foods to eat with caution as they may prove to act as food allergens, so beware.

Exercise caution when eating the following foods on keto if you generally experience food sensitivities or are otherwise intolerant to these ingredients:

- Cow's Milk
- Eggs
- Tree Nuts
- Peanuts
- Shellfish
- Wheat
- Soy
- Fish

It's vital to remain vigilant—especially for those with known sensitivities—with food allergens as ones' reaction to them can be mild, resulting in itching or a rash, to rare and severe instances of anaphylaxis which can prove life-threatening.

15 - Food High in Purines



Purines are an organic compound in the body and are present in some foods. However, the issue is that purines synthesize into uric acid, potentially forming crystals that lodge in your joints and produce pain and inflammation.

Limiting these foods is best if you suffer from chronic issues like fibromyalgia or rheumatoid arthritis. Consuming large amounts of these foods can compound the inflammatory effect of those conditions and may result in many unpleasant physical symptoms like joint soreness and increased fatigue.

Keep an eye on the quantities of the following foods you consume in your meal plan and tailor ingredients or portions based on how your body responds:

High-Purine Foods Include:

- Alcoholic beverages (all varieties)
- Some fish, seafood, and shellfish—including anchovies, sardines, herring, mussels, codfish, scallops, trout, and haddock
- Some meats, such as bacon, turkey, veal, venison, and organ meats like liver

Eating foods including purines is likely on a ketogenic diet: items like bacon, fish, and venison are all selections generally welcomed when seeking to curb carbs in ones' diet.

However, monitoring your intake of the noted foods is wise if you're concerned about developing or triggering conditions like gout—often sparked by consuming protein and purine-rich foods.



16 - Nightshades (e.g., tomatoes, bell peppers, chili peppers, eggplant, et al.)



Rich, colorful, and antioxidant-rich foods like bell peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, and zucchini, are nutrient-dense and lower on the glycemic scale, so they fit nicely into a keto diet.

However, some recent buzz around these boldly-hued veggies has given a little cause for concern, but additional scientific study is needed to determine definite causation. Still, it's worth noting that some share experiencing digestive and other issues when eating the foods in this category, so take note.

However, don't fret over the prospect of eating a ketofied eggplant parmesan or a plentiful platter of zucchini noodles doused in a creamy low-carb alfredo sauce unless you find yourself feeling bloated or otherwise upset after eating the foods listed.

17 - Bitter Almonds



 **KONSCIOUS**

The sweeter variety of almonds, which we find in local stores, is rich in vitamin E and fiber, a quality selection for the carb-conscious dieter. Still, the bitter brand is the kind to avoid as they contain significant levels of the toxic chemical cyanide, which can be poisonous if consumed.

Wild, bitter almonds contain approximately 50 times more cyanide than their sweet counterparts and aren't safe to eat, even in small amounts. Thankfully, bitter almonds aren't a commodity in the US, but beware as imported brands may expose consumers to cross-contamination.

Imported almonds have faced recalls—with bitter pods finding their way into sweet almond freights and sullyng the entire parcel—potentially sickening the masses once distributed in local stores.

Consider exclusively buying almonds grown in the US, whether organic or conventional, if you're concerned about cyanide poisoning; it's likely your best bet.

SUMMARY

We often gauge a food's healthfulness based on its macronutrients—especially the net carb count when following a ketogenic diet—but there are other factors to consider when selecting which low-carb foods to incorporate into your meal plan for weight loss and improved overall health.

Limit inflammatory foods and ingredients, opting for more alkaline-producing foods that aid in digestion and rarely promote allergenic flares. And make an effort to diversify your menu so as not to overdo it in one area by consuming too much of a generally harmless food.

As for foods with no nutritionally-redeeming value, like trans fats and fully-hydrogenated fats, ditch these food-like products entirely as there's no upside to including them into your diet.

It's important to make intentional decisions regarding our food choices, as our health and that of our loved ones depend on our discernment and diligence. Focus on stocking up on and consuming primarily organic, whole, antioxidant-rich foods and limit those that might work against your efforts to achieve optimal health.

You've made it to the end, and now you're equipped with a solid basis to make thoughtful choices that prevent inflammation. Instead of focusing on limiting food, concern yourself with the abundance of alkaline-forming, low-glycemic foods that you get to use in an endless array of recipes.

Plus, the body's adjustment from running on sugar to fueling itself primarily with fat and ketones will automatically recalibrate your appetite and tastes while completely altering your relationship with food, forever, for the better.

So, if the thermogenic benefits of keto have you stoked but you equally care about eating an antioxidant-rich diet that cuts out inflammatory foods and thwarts disease, stick around and read this brief yet informative guide completely for some crucial tips.

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