

## Defeating Pain with Lifestyle Changes

At the **Southwest Florida Free Pain Clinic**, we are dedicated to helping our patients defeat their pain. We work hard to give you the tools you need to treat the condition causing your pain so that you can return to life. However, we realize that is only part of the story. There are things **you must do** to defeat your pain! Otherwise, the treatments we provide will not work and you will continue to live in pain.

We know that **inflammation** is a big part of your painful condition. Whether you have an acute injury or a chronic painful condition, inflammation is an underlying cause of your pain and disability. There are definitely things that cause inflammation in your body, or allow it to continue. If you can make the necessary changes outlined below, your inflammation will greatly decrease and so will your pain! In addition, you will be healthier, have more energy, be in a better mood, and need less medical treatment for preventable diseases in the future.

**Toxins** must be eliminated. Pain patients do not get better if they use **tobacco** or **alcohol**. You must **stop** smoking and drinking in order to have any chance of healing. All illegal **drugs** must be stopped immediately, including pot. These poisons create inflammation and pain.

**Diet** is extremely important as you seek to get out of pain. You must do the following:

1. Eliminate all **wheat** from your diet. Gluten is very inflammatory and is found mostly in wheat, but also rye and barley. Gliadin from wheat is also inflammatory. That means that bread and pasta must go. Wheat is also hidden in many foods. Read labels. By eliminating wheat, you will lose weight, have less gut problems, and have lower blood sugar, reducing the risk of Diabetes.
2. No **High Fructose Corn Syrup**. It is in a lot of things, including many sweetened beverages (soda, Gatorade, etc). It is a poison. Your Liver makes fructose directly into fat. Read labels.
3. No **artificial sweeteners** (aspartame/Nutrasweet, saccharin/Sweet and Low, Splenda) or diet food/drinks. They are poisons and cause weight gain, not weight loss. They cause inflammation and other health issues.
4. Reduce or eliminate **cow's milk** and all dairy products. The proteins in cow's milk cause inflammation. Goat's milk/products are OK.
5. Stop eating **GMO's** (Genetically Modified Organisms)-this includes corn, soy, canola oil, cottonseed oil, vegetable oil, and sugar from sugar beets unless it is organic or certified free of GMO's. Go to the Institute for Responsible Technology website for the non-GMO shopping guide.
6. Avoid all **pesticides**, especially on foods. Go to the Environmental Working Group website [ewg.org](http://ewg.org) for lists of the Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen. Pesticides poison your endocrine system and metabolism. Start eating organic produce.
7. Eliminate **plastic** from your diet-don't microwave in it, don't use plastic bags and wraps, and get rid of the plastic water bottles. Use glass, ceramic, or stainless steel. Plastics poison your endocrine system and metabolism.
8. Eliminate **processed foods**-things with an ingredient list and chemicals you can't pronounce. Try to eat whole foods-fruits vegetables, nuts, beans, and protein. Remember: wheat and processed sugar feed inflammation.
9. Eliminate **rice and rice products** from your diet. Rice is contaminated with arsenic, a poison.
10. Eliminate excess **omega 6 fatty acids** as these increase inflammation. They are found in corn, sunflower, safflower, peanut and cottonseed oils. They are also found in grain fed meats and farm

raised fish. Also eliminate **trans fatty acids**. Omega 6 and trans fatty acids are typically found in processed and fried foods, sweets, and fast foods.

So, how should you eat and what can you eat?

1. Try to **eat 6 times daily** to reduce stress on your body-3 meals and 3 snacks. Each meal should have some protein, good grains, fruits and veggies. Snacks can be a dozen nuts or a piece of fruit.
2. Eat 15-20 grams of **protein** at each meal. This includes grass fed lean red meat, white meat skinless chicken, white meat turkey, and other meats free of hormones and antibiotics. Eggs are good. Wild caught fish and shrimp are good. Try vegetable protein such as organic hemp or soy.
3. Drink 70-80 ounces of reverse osmosis or distilled **water** daily. This does not include sodas or sports drinks-they need to go. Consider putting a Reverse Osmosis system under the kitchen sink to make your own water for drinking and cooking. This will help eliminate the plastic water bottles and will save you money.
4. Eat **fruits and vegetables** free of pesticides. Lots of them. Eat brightly colored and dark green leafy ones. Eat tubers such as sweet potatoes. A **pesticide wash** you can make in a spray bottle combines a cup of water and 1 tbsp baking soda, then slowly pour in 1 cup vinegar and ½ lemon. Leave this on produce for 5 minutes and then rinse off.
5. Eat **raw nuts**. Walnuts and almonds are the healthiest, but all are good. They have lots of calories, so eat them as snacks, only a dozen or so at a time. Nuts have good fatty acids, fiber, and protein. Roasting and processing destroys some of the nutrients.
6. Eat dark chocolate (75% or more cocoa) or unprocessed raw **cocoa** powder. Cocoa is very high in antioxidants, magnesium, and other good things. Avoid commercial processed chocolate as it is loaded with fat and sugar.
7. Eat good **oils**, such as extra virgin olive oil and coconut oil. Organic butter is OK.
8. Eat **beans**. They are high in fiber, protein, and other good nutrients. Wash them thoroughly if out of a can as they will be contaminated with plastics (BPA).
9. Drink limited amounts of **coffee and tea**, especially green tea. There are antioxidants and good compounds in them. Avoid creamers and sweeteners. Use a little honey, agave nectar, or stevia.

**Sleep** is essential to healing. You must get 7-8 hours of deep sleep nightly. Many pain patients have trouble sleeping. For falling asleep, Melatonin, Tryptophan, and Taurine can help. You need a quiet, dark room with a comfortable temperature. Do not use computers or watch TV 30 minutes prior to bed or if you wake up. Reading is calming for the brain; try reading the Bible before bed or if you wake up. Benadryl can help make you tired. Consult us if you can't sleep for prescription medications to help.

Reduce **Stress** to reduce inflammation. How do we do that? By taking time to relax, meditate, listen to music, read, and talk. Turn off the electronics, the computer, TV, social media, etc. Critical to reducing stress is your **spiritual life**. The Bible, prayer, fellowship with others in church, worship, listening to Christian music, and your overall relationship with God will help reduce the effects of stress. Speak to us further to get help with your spiritual life. **Counseling** can be very effective at reducing or even eliminating some kinds of pain, as well.

Lack of **exercise** causes inflammation and increases pain. You must move to heal. Even walking can help. We can advise you on what exercises you can do to help your condition.



Several **supplements** can help reduce inflammation and pain. These include Omega 3 fatty acids, MSM, Antioxidants, Vitamin D3, Curcumin (Turmeric), Ginger, and Garlic. Ask us about dosing.

In summary, inflammation is a critical part of your pain syndrome. There are definitely things you can do to reduce your level of inflammation and pain. By following the recommendations above, your quality of life will improve and our therapy for your condition will be more successful.

God bless you,  
Alan W. Gruning, DO, FACOEP