

Fanning Your Body's In-FLAME-mation

BY DR. JOHN SALERNO

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A common question I hear from women coming to me for help with weight loss is, “what does it mean when your body is suffering from inflammation?” Inflammation is a condition that I believe deserves explanation, as it is often an overlooked factor in women’s struggle to lose weight.

It seems as though everyone today is tossing around the word “inflammation”, but few are clear on what it means. I define it as an intense immune response in your body that causes an increase in systemic inflammation. The primary and classic responses to this are redness, heat, pain and swelling inside or visibly on the outside. For example, when you get stung by a bee you swell and turn red at the site. This is a natural and helpful inflammatory response. Your body releases a cascade of immune protecting chemicals, which rush to the site to rescue you from further damage. This type of inflammatory response is supposed to help your body heal from invaders such as toxins, bacteria or a virus.

But, when your immune system is working overtime because of exposure to chronic stressors, such as lack of sleep, over exercise, foods which contain inflammatory compounds and fats (i.e. dairy, sugar, gluten and corn) – you’ll likely experience the negative side effects of low-grade inflammation. One side effect of unmanaged inflammation is unwanted weight gain and weight-loss resistance.

Inflammation can pack on the pounds several different ways. It makes your body resistant to key chemical messengers that help you manage stress, burn body fat and normalize your hunger and cravings (i.e. ghrelin and leptin hormone levels).

A great example of inflammation causing chemical resistance is with your key stress hormone, cortisol. When your body does not hear its signal, your levels will continue to rise, stressing you out even more, storing belly fat and causing crushing cravings. Elevated levels in cortisol eventually lead to drops in serotonin (a feel good neuro-hormone), so you end up feeling more anxious, less optimistic and restless in bed. Over a prolonged period or during an extremely stressful event your body may quit pumping out cortisol, which may lead to intense feelings of fatigue, apathy and sluggishness.

Inflammation also causes a chemical resistance to your key satiety hormone, leptin. Meaning your cells aren’t hearing leptin’s signal that you are full, and it’s time to stop eating. So you eat more, well past the point where your brain would normally be signaling “put your fork down!”

Lastly, an inflamed body keeps your body from responding correctly to adonectin, a protein hormone which helps regulate blood sugars and body fat.

When you add up all of these reactions, you end up with fat gain and fat retain.

I hope you are now beginning to understand how inflammation causes you to gain weight and become weight loss resistant. It is also very important to know that fat cells don’t just sit there on your butt, hips and belly. Fat cells release inflammatory chemicals called cytokines, which continues the inflammatory process. So carrying around that extra fat is basically making you more fat. This is why I want you to lose the fat quickly and lower your inflammation too.

The good news is that following the B3H+ medically supervised weight loss program can help you break this inflammatory cycle. They create a customized nutrition and health plan to reduce your inflammation. They encourage you to pull inflammatory foods from the diet and support your digestive and immune system with a high quality probiotic.

Dr. Kealy, the B3H+ medical director and their nutritionist also emphasize loading up on healing foods that give your body a fresh, healing start. Meanwhile, you’ll be quickly on your way to dropping the pounds and feeling 10 years younger. I highly recommend this program for any woman who is struggling to lose weight.

Founder of The Salerno Center for Complementary Medicine, Dr. John P. Salerno is renowned for professional, comprehensive, full-service, and life-changing health solutions.

