

# Dr. Don Colbert: The Hidden Dangers of Inflammation

Inflammation is your body's immune response to harmful stimuli, such as pathogens (viruses, bacteria), toxic compounds and more. It has long been known to be the root cause of virtually every chronic disease that comes through a doctor's office door, including arthritis, heart disease, most cancers, most all autoimmune diseases, Parkinson's disease and especially Alzheimer's and dementia.

Why is inflammation so powerful?

❑ Suppose you have a water leak behind your upstairs shower. On the floor below, a watermark appears on one wall, and you paint over it. Problem solved. It's nothing that another coat of paint every few months can't cure!

But behind the drywall, the water damage spreads. Over time, you may have wood rot, ruined walls and mold. And if the mold affects the health of those in your family, you could be looking at costly medical bills, remediation of the home and maybe even needing to sell your home.

Clearly, it would have been better to fix the problem.

In the very same way, inflammation goes on below the surface. It slowly but surely causes more and more damage. The symptoms appear small and may even be in one specific area at first. We may try to treat them, but if the treatment is not a true fix, then it's just a patch.

Inflammation leads to disease eventually, not immediately.

To be diagnosed with Alzheimer's or dementia, patients are almost always in the moderate to severe range. They could have done so much more to fix, repair and reverse it had they

started working on it earlier.

## **Don't Let Your Symptoms Go Unchecked**

Let me share a little personal example (it wasn't "little" at the time, but in comparison to the brain, you could call it little.) Many years ago, I had terrible psoriasis all over my body. I tried every lotion, potion, treatment, cream and pill under the sun.

Nothing changed until I figured out, by food allergy tests and the process of elimination, that I was very sensitive to gluten, peppers and tomatoes. These three, which I ate almost daily and actually craved, were causing incredible inflammation in my gut. For me, that translated into psoriasis on my skin.

It took me about five years to finally figure it all out, including repairing leaky gut and restoring beneficial bacteria in the gut, but I did! When the symptoms finally cleared up, it was an incredible relief! I've had no symptoms for many years, but I still make it a practice to avoid or very infrequently eat gluten, peppers and tomatoes.

In the same way, when you fix whatever has been causing your inflammation, the symptoms will usually eventually clear up. They have to because you removed the point of inflammation. You went to the source and fixed the problem. You remove the thorn, and you will eventually heal.

For the sake of your brain, quenching any inflammation is always the best plan of attack. Elevated blood sugar and insulin resistance are also associated with inflammation.

## **Dr. Colbert's Top Tip for Inflammation**

I highly recommend a healthy keto diet. A healthy keto diet not only slows or stops inflammation, it also helps heal your gut, feeds your good bacteria and protects your brain from

plaque buildup. Basically, a healthy keto diet does it all!

On a side note, one very common sign of inflammation is the presence of belly fat. Usually, the more belly fat someone has, the higher their inflammatory markers and the smaller their hippocampus (the brain's memory center). A shrinking hippocampus is not a good thing!

Also, belly fat itself is highly inflammatory. Inflammation may be caused by diet (as was my psoriasis), infections, toxins, a leaky gut, medications or something else. Sugar and trans fats are inflammatory to everyone, and gluten and dairy are inflammatory to many.

Everyone agrees that inflammation must be stopped because it leads directly to disease and often to Alzheimer's and dementia, but will they do anything about it? Sadly, not many will.

Most causes of inflammation are self-induced, and changing a habit, especially if it is a food and lifestyle habit, is not the easiest thing to do. But when it comes to the brain and the very real risk of Alzheimer's and dementia, making new habits is easy!

❌ For every cause of inflammation, there are options and answers. If you have inflammation, don't ignore it, don't see how it is next year, and don't give it the band-aid treatment. Find its root cause and fix it now. You will be very glad you did.

*This excerpt was taken from chapter 19 of Dr. Colbert's Healthy Brain Zone. For more information about the book, visit . {eoa}*

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**Don Colbert, MD**, has been a board-certified family practice doctor for over twenty-five years in Orlando, Florida, and

*most recently in Dallas, Texas. He is also board-certified in antiaging medicine through the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine and has received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine. He is the author of three New York Times best-selling books: "Dr. Colbert's Keto Zone Diet," "The Seven Pillars of Health" and "Dr. Colbert's 'I Can Do This' Diet," along with best sellers "Toxic Relief," the Bible Cure series, "Living in Divine Health" and "Stress Less." He has sold more than 10 million books and treated more than 50,000 patients in his years of practicing medicine.*

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## **Dr. Don Colbert: How This Every Day Ingredient is Killing Your Brain**

*Read Time: 4 Minutes 43 Seconds*

Of the many artificial sweeteners out there, such as aspartame, sucralose (Splenda), saccharin (Sugar Twin and Sweet'N Low) and neotame (NutraSweet), aspartame is one of the most common.

How common? Aspartame is an ingredient in more than 6,000 different processed foods!

You name it, and it probably has aspartame in it. From chewing gum to desserts, yogurts to vitamins, from toothpaste to salad dressings and medicines to diet drinks, aspartame is absolutely everywhere!

With artificial sweeteners, as with most dementogens, it is the cumulative effect and high amounts that cause dementia and

Alzheimer's. This holds true for all artificial sweeteners.

Aspartame, in particular, has been found to cause:

- Anxiety
- Cognitive impairment
- Depression
- Headaches
- Irritable moods
- Learning impairment
- Memory issues
- Migraines
- Sleep impairment.

Remember back in high school science class when it was time to dissect a frog? The liquid those frogs are preserved in is called formaldehyde. When aspartame is consumed, it breaks down into aspartic acid, phenylalanine, methanol and formaldehyde in your body and brain.

There is absolutely nothing good about formaldehyde being in your brain cells!

Formaldehyde can kill cells in your tissues and your brain, converting to formic acid, which is highly toxic.

Cognitive symptoms you certainly don't want, such as "deficits in complex attention, inefficient information processing, reduced executive functioning, slower processing speed and long-term memory loss," are all a result of consuming aspartame.

Aspartame is poisonous to the brain, but its negative impact is multiplied when consumed with carbohydrates.

What's already bad becomes even worse when insulin levels spike—and they will spike when you eat high-sugar and high-carb foods, such as doughnuts, cereal, pancakes with syrup, bread, white rice, most desserts, pasta and countless other

foods!

✘ We have for years been sold the idea that “sugar-free” is a good thing. When artificial sweeteners are used, rest assured that they more than eclipse any health benefits from the lack of sugar.

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life” (Gal. 6:7-8).

One of the challenges with the brain is relying on sugar (glucose) for energy, and unlike other cells in your body, your “brain cells cannot convert fats or proteins into glucose, so they depend on daily glucose for optimal functioning and survival.” Your brain needs energy, just not in the artificial form.

There is more than enough glucose in what you eat or drink daily for your brain to function. It’s not like you need to start taking in sugar to feed the brain. There is plenty of glucose in carbohydrates and starches on hand to go around.

### **Brain-Healthy Alternatives**

Here are a few healthier, natural sweeteners that do not trigger Alzheimer’s or dementia:

- Erythritol
- Monk fruit
- Stevia
- Swerve
- Xylitol
- Vcon syrup

### **For Your Ongoing Health**

If you cannot avoid artificial sweeteners, be they aspartame, sucralose (Splenda), saccharin (Sugar Twin and Sweet'N Low) or neotame (NutraSweet), the next best thing is to reduce your intake. Yes, that will probably be the end of drinking virtually all sugar-free soft drinks and eating certain foods, but you no doubt knew they weren't healthy for you anyway.

Though artificial sweeteners are a dementogen, they are simply one of the many dementogens out there that accumulatively cause Alzheimer's and dementia. What is the best thing you can do to protect yourself from Alzheimer's and dementia regarding sugar and artificial sweeteners?

There are two answers:

- Avoid artificial sweeteners and reduce or avoid sugar.
- Know how sugar harms the brain.

When you know how sugar harms your brain, you are far more likely to make healthier decisions. This knowledge will help you avoid Alzheimer's and dementia because this knowledge will usually stick with you for the rest of your life!

Sugar and your brain work like this:

- Sugar (be it from a carbohydrate, fruit sugar, starch, or other) converts to glucose in your bloodstream.
- Excessive glucose attaches to proteins, forming advanced glycation end products, obstructing their work and aging your brain and body.
- Your body produces insulin to lower the glucose levels.
- Your body produces insulin-degrading enzyme (IDE) to break down the insulin so it does not lower your sugar levels too low.

This happens all the time in real life, especially with afternoon snacks at a coffee shop, a meal at a fast-food restaurant or dessert after a hearty dinner. Substantial insulin spikes are required to lower the sugars in most

foods/drinks consumed in the standard American diet. People who consume meals, snacks, drinks and late-night munchies may have five or six insulin spikes a day or more.

Now, the body is a wonderful creation, and every time there is an insulin spike, the multitasking IDE (insulin-degrading enzyme) comes in and balances everything out. So you might be thinking, "What's the problem?"

✘ It's this little-known fact: the IDE in your body must choose between (1) breaking down insulin in your blood, and (2) breaking down amyloid plaques in your brain. Your amazing IDE cannot do both. It either breaks down the insulin your body created to handle what you ate/drank, or it breaks down the amyloid plaques that build up in your brain—the very plaques that are ever-present in the brains of people living with Alzheimer's.

Here is another important fact about IDE that you must know: it will always break down insulin first. Is it a good idea to keep your IDE busy lowering insulin levels with an artificially sweetened beverage? I don't think so. Drink a glass of water. Or green tea. Or coffee. Let your IDE stick to the most important things, such as breaking down those amyloid plaques!

For more information about "Dr. Colbert's Healthy Brain Zone," and to order the book, visit [or](#) .

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## Healthy Resolutions

**You don't have to go through another year overweight and out of shape. Take these 10 steps to good health.**

Would you choose to fly on an airline that had a track record of arriving safely at a destination only 5 percent of the time? Of course not! You wouldn't dare set foot on one of that company's planes. Yet every day, dieters around the world embark on a new diet with the same success rate.

Some hop on board the latest hyped-up, low-fat, wonderworking program that has made it past the late-night infomercial phase to become a *New York Times* best-seller. Still others prefer a more adventurous journey with a no-carb, miracle pound-shedder that has a host of B-list celebrities touting its amazing results. Of course, almost all who set out to lose weight via one of these diets swear that it will be absolutely, *positively* the last one they'll ever try.

It seems everyone is looking for the "diet to end all diets." Sadly, people are looking for something that doesn't exist. Why? Because in the long run, dieting just doesn't work.

Some reports indicate that only 2 percent of all dieters manage to lose weight and keep it off for good; others claim it's closer to 5 percent. Although those figures are hotly contested, what we do know for certain is that even those

researchers who support dieting concur that diets fail at least 80 to 90 percent of the time.

After a year, the overwhelming majority of dieters regain whatever weight they've lost. Worse still, almost two-thirds end up weighing even more within four or five years than before they started their yes, there are those who may lose 100-plus pounds on certain programs. However, the vast majority of patients gain the weight back—and usually more weight—because they have become metabolically compromised.

You're probably wondering: *Dr. Colbert, why would you even recommend a diet plan if diets don't work? And why should I bother trying to lose weight if it will most likely come back?*

I'll be honest with you: If you are just looking to continue the pattern of following here-today, gone-tomorrow fad diets, you may as well put down this article now. Why? Because I think dieting, over the long haul, is one of the surest ways to become frustrated, discouraged, fed up and even depressed about losing weight.

After treating more than 40,000 patients during the last 25 years, I have observed some definitive commonalities among those who repeatedly attempted to lose weight, only to gain it back. I have also found a medically verifiable answer that leads to lifetime success in this area.

So what makes my "I can do this" diet different from diets in other books? The "can do" part, for one thing! It's doable, and it works. As a medical doctor, I deal with getting results—verifiable results that prove a patient is on his way to long-term health, not just fixing an immediate problem.

Yes, my diet is far more than a diet; it's a lifestyle. It does not offer you a quick-fix approach to anything. But it does offer you principles that are meant to last for life, principles that have been proven to work for thousands of individuals for more than a decade and counting. If you want

to lose weight and keep it off, follow these 10 steps to a healthier life:

- **1. Make a commitment to lose weight.** A commitment is more than a goal. It is a framework for your progression in life, a long-term vision that goes beyond just reaching your targeted ideal weight. And when you combine rock-steady commitment with positive emotion that propels you to the next level, suddenly succeeding on a daily, weekly or monthly basis becomes much easier.
- **2. Set reachable goals.** When you embark on a lifestyle change to lose weight, it's crucial to establish goals. However, they must be realistic if you hope to reach them. An unrealistic goal for weight or clothing size sets you up for discouragement, and people who become discouraged will usually stop the program altogether and eventually gain back all their weight.
- **3. Keep a food journal.** Keeping a food journal while losing weight is a tremendous motivator for most individuals because it creates accountability. I am not recommending that you track your calories every day during the program. That, like many dieting techniques, can become such a burden that it is more harmful than helpful. To get an idea of how many calories you are ingesting daily, however, you need to start this program by recording everything you eat and the associated calorie intake for three weekdays and one weekend day.

You may discover your meal portions are too big. Or you may find out your calorie count for a particular meal is much higher than you thought. It will be easy to determine such problems if you simply take the time to record what you eat and the number of calories consumed in a food journal.

- **4. Measure yourself.** You do not need a scale or any other fancy tools to evaluate your progress—just a simple tape measure. By focusing on your waist

measurement and achieving your goal measurement, you will eliminate one of the main risk factors for disease, toxic fat in your abdominal area. You can track other measurements, such as body weight and body fat percentage, along with your waist measurement *once a month*—not once a week. Log these in your food journal so you will have a clearly established goal.

- **5. Eat the right foods in the right combination.** Your body needs three food components daily: carbohydrates, proteins and fats. All the calories you consume can be attributed to one of these groups. Healthy, low-glycemic carbohydrates should comprise about 40 percent of your total calorie intake per day, good proteins 30 percent, and healthy fats another 30 percent. Each meal should contain all three components. Avoid all white flour and white sugar as well as beverages and food products that contain artificial sweeteners. (For more details about exactly what foods to eat and beverages to drink, see *Dr. Colbert's "I Can Do This" Diet*, available January 5.)
- **6. Eat at the right times.** One of the most important principles of the "I can do this" diet is to eat three meals a day, with no carbohydrates after 6 p.m. The reason is that these three meals provide the fuel your body needs at the times it needs the fuel most. The most important of these three fueling times is breakfast—a meal many people often skip.
- **7. Eat healthy snacks.** The correct fuel mixture at meals should control your hunger for three to four hours. Yet most people go longer than that between meals, allowing their blood sugar to drop and causing a noticeable decrease in energy and mental clarity. The right mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks will enable you to remain hunger-free and productive for several hours, and a snack an hour before bed will help ensure restful

sleep.

- **8. Control your portion size.** Most Americans eat *more* of what they eat than is healthy for them. We have become accustomed to ignoring serving sizes on food labels and eating the amount we've trained our stomachs and brains to demand. It's time to exercise some portion control!
- **9. Engage in physical activity.** Exercise is essential. This truth applies universally to every human being, but especially to anyone hoping to lose pounds. You can restrict your diet and eat less than your daily requirement, yet without burning off calories through physical activity, you have only half the equation.
- **10. Take safe weight-loss supplements.** A weight-loss supplement is a nutritional product or herb intended to *assist* your healthy eating and activity plan with the ultimate goal of losing weight. A supplement comes alongside; it does not replace.

Most supplements for weight loss have no sound clinical research supporting their claims, and some—including those containing fenfluramine, ephedra and aristolochia—are dangerous. However, there are a number of safe and effective dietary supplements that look promising for weight loss. My favorite is PGX fiber because it suppresses appetite by making you feel full, but there are several others described in my book that you may want to try.

Following the lifestyle principles described above will provide many benefits beyond weight loss. It will help you improve your overall health, manage stress and prevent stress-related eating. In fact, it is the best program you can be on during not only the good times but also the most chaotic times of your life.

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**Don Colbert, M.D.**, is board-certified in family practice and anti-aging medicine. He has also received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine. Colbert is the author of the *New York Times* best-selling book *The Seven Pillars of Health*, as well as best-sellers *Toxic Relief*, *The Bible Cure* series and *Eat This and Live*. His most recent book, *Dr. Colbert's "I Can Do This" Diet* (), releases January 5.

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## **LOSE IT FOR GOOD**

Did you resolve, to no avail, to lose weight last year? Visit to find practical ways to stick to this year's health resolutions and lose it for good.

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## **Lighten Up!**

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## **Curb Your Stress**

*NOT EVERY PERCEIVED THREAT IS REAL. FIND OUT HOW TO GAIN CONTROL OVER THE THINGS THAT NEEDLESSLY STRESS YOU OUT.*

We have a stress epidemic in our nation.

The majority of Americans very likely have excessive stress in

their lives, and reports of stress seem to indicate that the percentage of Americans each year who feel under “a great deal of stress” is rising.

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## **Shed Those Pounds**

Being obese increases the risk of developing heart disease or cancer.

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## **Metal in Your Mouth**

The commonly used silver and amalgam dental fillings contain mercury—lots of it.

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## **Eat Like the Greeks**

The most healthful diet in the world is the opposite of what most Americans eat

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# Relief for Tendinitis

Proteolytic enzymes are excellent for reducing inflammation that is accompanied by pain.

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# Feeling Grumpy, Guys?

Hormonal imbalances that occur in middle age can cause “the grumpy old man” syndrome.