

# FERMENTED FOODS & INFLAMMATION

JUNE 2025



## DID YOU KNOW THAT ONE OF THE EASIEST WAYS TO REDUCE INFLAMMATION AND IMPROVE YOUR OVERALL HEALTH COULD BE RIGHT IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR?

Fermented foods—like yogurt, pickles, and sourdough bread—are not only flavorful but also powerful allies in supporting your body's natural defenses. Adding fermented foods to your daily meals is a simple step with benefits that go far beyond digestion.

### WHY DOES REDUCING INFLAMMATION MATTER?

Inflammation is your body's natural response to injury or illness—but when it becomes chronic, it can quietly fuel many serious health problems, including:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Obesity
- Autoimmune conditions (like rheumatoid arthritis & lupus)
- Cognitive decline (such as Alzheimer's disease)
- Certain cancers

Chronic inflammation often begins in the gut, especially when the balance of bacteria there—your microbiome—is disrupted. That's where fermented foods come in.

### WHAT ARE FERMENTED FOODS AND WHY ARE THEY SO POWERFUL?

Fermented foods contain probiotics: live, beneficial bacteria that help restore and maintain a healthy gut microbiome. A balanced gut can:

- Reduce inflammation
- Improve digestion & nutrient absorption
- Strengthen the immune system
- Support metabolism & healthy weight

A study from Stanford University found that people who ate more fermented foods had lower levels of inflammatory markers like IL-6, as well as a more diverse gut microbiome—an important sign of gut health and resilience.

### WHAT ARE SOME FERMENTED FOODS TO EAT?

Many fermented foods are easy to find in your local grocery store:

- Yogurt (choose unsweetened with live cultures)
- Kefir (a tangy, drinkable yogurt)
- Sauerkraut and Kimchi (fermented vegetables)
- Miso (fermented soy paste used in soups)
- Tempeh (fermented soy product with a nutty flavor)
- Naturally fermented pickles (not just vinegar-based)
- Kombucha (fermented tea)
- Sourdough bread (made with live culture starter)

### HOW DO I ADD FERMENTED FOODS TO MY DIET?

Incorporating these foods doesn't have to be a major diet overhaul. Try these tips:

- Start with what you know – Add a spoonful of greek yogurt to your breakfast.
- Swap your condiments – Use kimchi or sauerkraut on sandwiches instead of ketchup or mayo.
- Snack smart – Pair kefir with fruit or enjoy a few tempeh slices with hummus.
- Drink your probiotics – Try a bottle of kombucha.
- Cook with care – Stir in miso after cooking soups to preserve its probiotic benefits.
- Create a habit – Pair fermented foods with meals you already enjoy.

### WHAT ARE SOME THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND?

While fermented foods are safe and beneficial for most people, there are a few precautions to be aware of:

- Start slow to avoid bloating.
- Watch for high sodium in pickles, sauerkraut and kimchi.
- Check labels for dairy or soy if you have allergies.