

The Courtyard Clinic

Physical
Health

Inflammation



Osteopathy/Physiotherapy Sports & Remedial Massage

- Back, Neck & Shoulder pain
- Joint & Muscle Injuries
- Headaches
- Arthritis
- Rib Pain
- Sports Injuries

Podiatry/Chiropody

- Toenail Problems
- Corns & Callouses
- Verrucae
- Diabetic Foot Checks
- Foot Odour
- Footwear Advice



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This month we're going to talk about inflammation. Inflammation is our body's response to damage or trauma. It can be painful and uncomfortable and is therefore something we instinctively want to get rid of. However, inflammation is an essential part of the body's defence mechanism. It is the process by which the immune system recognizes and removes harmful and foreign stimuli and begins the healing process. Inflammation can be either acute (short term) or chronic (long term).



Acute Inflammation

This can arise from tissue damage caused by trauma, infection, a burn, or an irritant. Chemicals released by damaged tissues cause the blood vessels to dilate and become leaky. This allows the area to swell, the increased circulation makes the area red and hot. The inflammatory chemicals also trigger the release of immune cells. It starts rapidly, becomes severe in a short time and symptoms may last for a few days.

Chronic Inflammation

Chronic inflammation is also referred to as slow, long-term inflammation lasting for prolonged periods of several months to years. Generally, the extent and effects of chronic inflammation vary with the cause of the injury and the ability of the body to repair and overcome the damage.

There are many reasons why inflammation may become chronic. Chronic joint inflammation can occur due to wear and tear, recurrent injury or prolonged mechanical stress. At The Courtyard Clinic your practitioner will diagnose and treat the root cause of the inflammation. There are some conditions such as Rheumatoid Arthritis/ Lupus/Psoriatic arthritis (to mention a few) that might need further tests and treatment with a specialist. If we suspect any of these conditions we refer to a GP for blood tests and further referral.

What are NSAID's and how do they work?

NSAID is short for Non-steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Medication, it is the group of drugs that includes Ibuprofen, Diclofenac, Voltarol and Naproxen. These work by blocking the effect of natural chemicals called cyclo-oxygenase (also known as COX) enzymes. These enzymes help to make other chemicals in the body, called prostaglandins. Some prostaglandins are produced at sites of injury or damage, and cause pain and inflammation. By blocking the effect of COX enzymes, fewer prostaglandins are produced, which means pain and inflammation are eased.

"Should I be taking anti-inflammatories?"

This is a common question. It's worth remembering that pain and inflammation are normal, natural and necessary. Pain is an essential message that tells us when we are doing damage to our body and helps us to protect it.

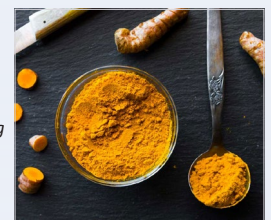
Inflammation is essential for healing and simply would not happen without it. Some studies have suggested that NSAID's can make healing time longer and less efficient. They can also come with side effects and should be taken with caution if you suffer with digestive or cardiovascular issues. Cold compresses may be useful, these can help manage and control swelling and pain rather than preventing inflammation altogether.

At the Courtyard Clinic our Osteopaths will diagnose the cause of your pain and, where appropriate, treat the problem allowing your body to heal and become pain-free as soon as possible. To learn more about inflammation scan the QR code above with your mobile or tablet to watch a video we made explaining more.

There are also a number of supplements that can help with inflammation. We've been in touch with our friends at Whole Health Foods in Edwards Walk, Maldon, to find out more. Here's what they told us....

There are four nutritional supplements we recommend for inflammation:

Curcumin is isolated from the turmeric spice and works as a powerful anti-inflammatory. Research suggests curcumin can help with oxidative and inflammatory conditions, including metabolic syndrome and arthritis. It may also help alleviate exercise-induced inflammation and muscle soreness.



Glucosamine is a key structural component of joint tissue. Although it is naturally present in the joints of the body, our natural levels of it begin to fall as we get older. As it is rarely found in natural food sources the easiest way to increase glucosamine intake is via supplementation.

Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM) is a supplement containing a naturally occurring sulphur compound found in foods such as fruit, corn, tea and coffee. Sulphur is present in the hair, nails and connective tissues of joints and skin. MSM works synergistically with glucosamine sulphate.

Serrapeptase is a miracle enzyme that was discovered in silk worms. It clears up waste proteins and even scar tissue in the body which can aggravate inflammatory conditions.

Reishi mushrooms also have a proven anti-inflammatory effect and are used to treat auto-immune conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and fibromyalgia.

We'd recommend popping in to Whole Health Foods next time you're in Maldon, they do great nutritional smoothies, and healthy porridge/soups if you're there around breakfast or lunchtime. Or check them out at wholehealthfoods.co.uk

The Courtyard Clinic - Osteopathy, Physiotherapy, Massage Therapy, Podiatry/Chiropody



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Clinic Opening Hours: Monday - Friday 8am to 7pm & Saturday 9am to 2pm

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