

Inflammation – Part I

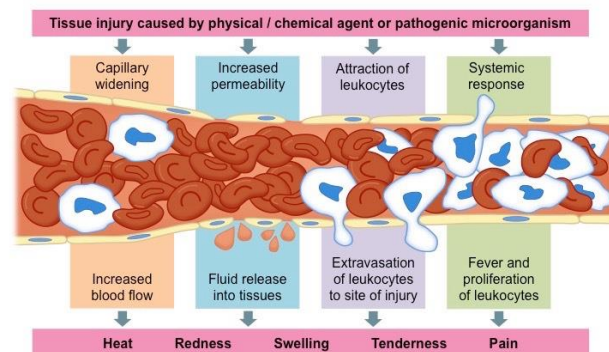
Welcome to this multi-part series on inflammation. Here we will discuss what inflammation is, why it's important and what we should do about it.

Diet culture promotes certain certain “superfoods” as anti-inflammatory, while labelling other foods as disease-promoting or inflammatory. Practices such as ice baths, cryotherapy or taking NSAIDs are also encouraged by some experts because of their anti-inflammatory effects. But what is inflammation, and why does it need to be avoided so vigorously?

Inflammation is the body's natural response to injury, and it is the first phase of the healing response. When tissue is injured, swelling and redness occur as a result of capillary widening. Capillary widening allows damaged cells to be removed, and healing cells to access the injury site.

Inflammation is uncomfortable. Signs and symptoms of inflammation include:

- Heat
- Redness
- Swelling
- Tenderness
- Pain (often leading to loss of function)



The acute inflammatory phase typically lasts 1-6 days, depending on the type and extent of the injury.

