



Natural Health Response

WITH DR. RICHARD GERHAUSER M.D.

Live LONGER and BETTER with Time-Tested BREATHING Solutions

Easy Ways to Improve Lung Function

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Editor, *Natural Health Response*

It's easy to take breathing for granted... until it becomes a struggle.

Lung function tends to decline starting around 35 at about 1-2 percent every year. Chronic exposure to air pollution dramatically speeds up the process.

With this decline comes an increase in the prevalence of lung conditions like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), pulmonary fibrosis, and lung infections, like pneumonia.

Even if you don't have a lung disease, you may have noticed that you get winded more easily climbing stairs or that you have less energy than you used to.

Please don't ignore symptoms like these.

How well your lungs function impacts more than just your quality of life... *it can affect how LONG you live.*



How well your lungs function impacts more than just your quality of life... it can affect how LONG you live—and exercise is the best way to boost your lung function.

Respiratory conditions are **the third leading cause of death** for people over 70 (behind cardiovascular disease and cancer).

Today, I want to tell you about a key measurement for lung function that can predict longevity.

I'll also tell you the precise steps you need to take to put a STOP to the age-related decline in pulmonary function so you can BREATHE EASIER and LIVE LONGER.

BEST predictors of longevity and improved quality of life isn't your cholesterol, blood pressure, or vitamin D levels.

It's a measurement called VO2 max.

VO2 max indicates the maximum amount of oxygen you can use during intense exercise.

In short, it tells you how well your lungs are functioning.

I've performed this test a thousand times in research at the University of Arizona and with my work at Canyon Ranch Medical Center. In fact, at Canyon Ranch, VO2 max was a key part of evaluating the level of health in our executive physicals.

A person achieves a higher level with regular physical training

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 3 Bladder Problems WRECKING Your Quality of Life?
- 6 STOP Popping Ineffective Anti-Inflammatory Pills

Overlooked Test REVEALS Longevity and Quality of Life

In all my years of practicing medicine, I've found that one of the

that conditions the cardiovascular system.

A vital component of VO2 max is **pulmonary function**, which is the ability of the lungs to move air and blood. This is closely tied to your overall health because a decline in breathing capacity affects every cell in your body.

The Biggest Threat to Lung Function

Besides age, the biggest threat to your lung function is **air pollution**.

Studies show that lung disease is much more prevalent in people living in polluted environments, like big cities.

In fact, one study found that the prevalence of lung disease was **5 times higher** in an area with air pollution compared to an area with cleaner air.

Minor effects could show up as breathing difficulties, coughing, and congestion. But, in the long run, poor air quality and factors like smoking can pave the way for more serious conditions like COPD and asthma.

As much as I love to be outdoors, I avoid exercising outside during the forest fire season here in Arizona. And, regardless of the time of year, I try to exercise FAR away from traffic and city centers.

During the winter, many areas develop an inversion where stagnant air is trapped close to the earth's surface. When this happens, air quality can reach dangerous levels, and it would be best to avoid exercise or to exercise indoors where the air is filtered.

Breathe BETTER and Protect Your Lungs with Exercise

Hands down, **exercise** is the *best* way to boost your lung function.

To *enhance* the effects of exercise on lung function, try **breathing through your nose** as you work out. It might seem counterintuitive since less air can pass through the narrow nasal passageways than the mouth. But the science proves nose-breathing is best.

An interesting study was done on recreational runners taught to perform nasal breathing while running.¹ During a maximum stress test protocol, the runners had **no loss** of VO2 max and **no loss** of time to exhaustion when breathing through their noses.

Even more surprisingly, nasal breathing showed **superior pulmonary economy** (better lung function) than normal mouth breathing during stress testing.

There's a simple reason for these impressive results.

Breathing through your nose **increases nitric oxide** in your lungs and blood vessels because the paranasal sinuses are a source of nitric oxide.

Optimizing nitric oxide has a two-for-one benefit. It helps preserve respiratory *and* vascular function.

You see, nitric oxide dilates the blood vessels coursing *through* the lungs—and widens the airflow passageways *in* the lungs. This translates to better oxygen for both your heart and lungs, which ultimately

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supports lung function and makes breathing easier.

Nitric oxide also acts as an antioxidant that helps prevent damage to the lining of blood vessels and airways.

Top 4 Plant Compounds to Boost Lung Function

Four time-tested plant compounds have been shown to have a meaningful impact on lung function and breathing.

Boswellia + Bael Fruit

Two nutrients that are often used together are **Boswellia** and **Bael fruit extract**.

Both have been used as traditional medicine remedies for asthma and other disorders for ages. More recently, in a randomized controlled trial, the pair improved breathing and lung function.²

In a study of adults with moderate asthma, Boswellia and Bael led to a **50 percent improvement in peak expiratory flow rate** (a measurement of lung capacity)—which translated to a **44 percent decrease in the use of asthma inhalers**.

Saffron

The spice **saffron** also has a long history of use for respiratory conditions. More recently, it was tested

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on asthma patients with great results.³ Taking saffron for eight weeks led to:

- 40 percent less rescue inhaler use
- 36 percent less activity limitation
- 33 percent less shortness of breath during the night

Saffron also decreased blood levels of the inflammatory marker C-reactive protein.

Andrographolide

Finally, the plant *Andrographis paniculata* is used in traditional Indian medicine to support immunity. The plant contains the compound *andrographolide* in its stems and leaves.

Animal and cell studies show that andrographolide may protect against lung damage. Research shows it inhibits DNA damage,

acts as an antioxidant, and reduces signs of inflammation.

Taking plant compounds like these can be especially beneficial if you can't avoid exposure to air pollution. For example, if you happen to live in a large city center, or like me, you get exposed to frequent smoky air from forest fires.

They also could help support better breathing in smokers or folks regularly exposed to secondhand smoke.

Life Extension released a new product called **Healthy Lungs** containing all four extracts. You can purchase it through www.lifeextension.com.

As always, I recommend that you consult your physician or alternative medicine practitioner before starting any new supplements.

Visit the website for a full reference list.

19 Seconds to Better Lung Function

Breathing exercises that maximize diaphragmatic breathing (belly breathing) are a great way to help preserve lung function. And they're easy to do.

For diaphragmatic breathing you inhale slowly through your nose for a count of 4 while letting the belly rise as if you were blowing up a balloon.

Then hold the air in your lungs for a count of 7.

Then exhale through your mouth to a count of 8.

This simple exercise doesn't JUST increase lung capacity. It lowers stress hormones (like cortisol) and blood pressure. Plus, it improves core muscle activation.

Bladder Problems WRECKING Your Quality of Life?

6 Non-Surgical Solutions for Pelvic Floor Dysfunction

One of my main goals as a doctor is to try to extend the life of my patients.

But *quality of life* is just as important for most people.

And if you're suffering from **pelvic floor dysfunction**, you know this condition can take a big hit to your quality of life.

Symptoms like urinary incontinence, fecal incontinence, and pelvic organ prolapse (when either your bladder, uterus, or rectum descend and eventually bulge out) can have you sitting on the sidelines.

The good news is that you can help **restore pelvic floor function**—and reduce these life-altering symptoms—without drugs or surgery.

I'll tell you about six non-surgical methods that can help improve your quality of life if you suffer from pelvic floor dysfunction.

What Is Pelvic Floor Dysfunction?

Pelvic floor muscles are part of the core muscles that stabilize your body. They are the base of the core musculature and are used to lift up and control the organs within your pelvis.

In men, the pelvic muscles support the bladder, urethra, prostate, colon, rectum, and anus.

In women, they support the bladder, urethra, uterus, colon, rectum, and anus.

These muscles squeeze and relax to control urination, defecation, and passing gas for both men and women. They also support sexual functioning like orgasm in both men and women, erections in men, vaginal contractions in women, and blood flow.

Pelvic floor dysfunction occurs when the muscles or connective tissue of the pelvic area become weak or injured. This can lead to urinary and/or fecal incontinence, sexual problems, chronic bleeding, or chronic pain.

For women, this can also lead to the protrusion of pelvic organs into the vagina (called pelvic organ prolapse).

A recent study showed that 32 percent of women suffer from some type of pelvic floor dysfunction.

Red flags include persistent pain, a mass, fecal incontinence, suspected neurological disease, problems voiding, having had previous continence surgery, previous pelvic cancer, or previous pelvic radiation therapy.

Try These *Non-Invasive* Treatments BEFORE Surgery

There are many options for treating pelvic floor dysfunction or pelvic organ prolapse. No single therapy will work for everyone, so it will be up to you and your doctor to determine which treatment (or combination of treatments) produces the best results.

Regardless of your route, I would start with the least invasive.

Many mainstream practitioners jump straight to prescription drugs or surgery, but I would only consider these as a last resort.

The prescription drugs typically used (anticholinergic meds) can potentially affect cognition.

And surgeries (which include either tightening up the muscles and/or applying support through a mesh) carry the risk of side effects such as increased pain, nerve damage, infection, bleeding, and problems with the mesh.

Those risks occur whether the surgery “works” or not!

In 41 percent of cases, the condition returns after surgery for pelvic organ prolapse. I can confirm these statistics, as I’ve had patients whose symptoms were *worse* after surgery. And in countless others, the improvements faded with time.

That would be pretty discouraging if those were your only options for attaining measurable improvements in your pelvic function.

Fortunately, *they’re not*.



Pelvic floor muscles are part of the core muscles that stabilize your body. They are the base of the core musculature and are used to lift up and control the organs within your pelvis.

I’ll share with you **6 non-invasive** ways to help combat pelvic floor dysfunction—and the quality-of-life issues that go along with it.

#1: Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy

Anyone with pelvic floor dysfunction should start here.

Just like you would see an occupational therapist to rehab an injured shoulder or knee, you should see a pelvic floor physical therapist to help rehab weak or injured pelvic floor muscles.

These specialists will be able to evaluate your condition, give you specific exercises to strengthen these deep core muscles, and will teach you how to do these exercises properly.

One particular exercise associated with boosting pelvic floor strength is called **Kegels**. If you can imagine using your muscles to stop the flow of urine or to stop yourself from passing gas in a crowded room, you have identified the muscles you’ll target during a Kegel.

It’s important to note that if Kegels are done improperly, they can make your condition worse. That’s why seeing a pelvic floor physical therapist is key.

The therapist can also identify and help correct issues with your posture that might contribute to symptoms.

#2: Hormone Treatment

One underlying cause of pelvic floor dysfunction in women is a decline in estrogen that occurs with perimenopause and menopause.

Estrogen is vital for the integrity of the collagen in your pelvic floor, the thickness of tissues in the vagina, for supporting the bladder and urethra muscle function, and for supplying ample blood flow to all of the tissues in the urogenital region.

So it’s hardly surprising that a dip in estrogen levels can show up in pelvic floor symptoms, like bladder leakage, urgency, frequency, vaginal discomfort, sexual dysfunction, or pelvic organ prolapse.

That’s why I always test hormone levels in women, including estrogens, progesterone, and testosterone. I also look closely at the 25 (OH) vitamin D level.

If a woman is postmenopausal and has low hormone levels, supplementing with bioidentical hormones can be helpful.

A low-risk hormone therapy is to use topical estrogen in the vagina. In my experience, estriol works well as a topical treatment and is thought to carry less risk of hormone-related cancers.

Progesterone can also be applied topically if it is low and doesn't increase breast cancer risk.

If testosterone (especially free testosterone) is low, it can be treated with low-dose testosterone troches that are made in a compounding pharmacy. (Troches are similar to lozenges and are placed between your cheek and gums.)

The hormones have anabolic properties, which can help strengthen epithelial tissues and muscles.

#3: Nude Sunbathing

Oxidative stress is an important factor in pelvic floor dysfunction. It is responsible for molecular changes in the structures that support your pelvic organs, and it causes a tremendous amount of inflammation.

One of the best ways to reduce oxidative stress is by fixing your light environment. This means getting more sun and less artificial light. And by "getting more sun," I mean exposing the affected area of the body to sun exposure.

Yes, this means **nude sunbathing**.

Nude sunbathing can be beneficial even if your vitamin D levels are already good—and even if you regularly expose other parts of your skin.

You see, the goal is to increase the darkness of the skin (a tan) in that area of your body by gradually increasing sun exposure.

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Pelvic floor dysfunction can be caused by low collagen levels. Collagen is essential because it makes up 70-80 percent of your body's connective tissue.

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This is critical because ultraviolet light stimulates an increase in melanin, **one of the body's most potent free radical scavengers**. This means it decreases the chronic inflammation that's thought to be one of the root issues of pelvic floor dysfunction.

Research shows that melanin absorbs all frequencies of light and splits water to produce more electrons, which powers energy production.

There are two additional benefits of UV light:

1. It raises vitamin D levels, which also decreases free radical damage.
2. It catalyzes the production of melatonin, which is the hormone that is the protector of our mitochondrial function.

The other side of the light environment coin is limiting exposure to artificial light. Exposure to blue frequencies at night destroys melatonin and eventually leads to mitochondrial dysfunction, a key factor in aging and disease.

#4: Boost Collagen Levels

Pelvic floor dysfunction can be caused by **low collagen levels**. Collagen is essential because it makes up 70-80 percent of your body's connective tissue.

Studies show that women with genital organ prolapse have 30 percent lower collagen concentration compared to women the same age *without* prolapse.

Other studies have found that women with more severe pelvic organ prolapse had collagen fibers that were significantly more degraded than in those with less severe conditions. They also had less type I collagen.

Fortunately, you can boost your collagen levels with the following:

- Dietary collagen and collagen peptides, which can be used to optimize collagen formation

Restore and Tone Your Pelvic Floor

An excellent way to help restore pelvic organ function is by increasing collagen levels and boosting blood flow to your pelvic organs.

A unique device can do *both* by delivering light and heat directly to the affected area.

vSculpt® is a device you insert into the vagina that uses red and infrared light, heat, and vibration.

- **Light therapy** increases the natural production of collagen and elastin, where your body needs it most. It also increases blood flow and circulation to the area.
- By providing gentle **heat**, it helps regenerate collagen to help restore elasticity.
- And the **vibration** helps tighten muscles and increase muscle tone.

Studies show using this device helps **restore** vaginal tissue and **tone** pelvic floor muscles.

Forty-eight women with stress urinary incontinence used vSculpt for 24 ten-minute sessions. After 50 days they reported improved pelvic floor muscle strength, less bladder symptoms, and improved quality of life.

A subsequent study showed 90 percent of users had less bladder leakage, and 95 percent had improved vaginal tightness.

If you want to learn more about this device, visit their website at

www.vsculpt.com.

- Bone broth
- Infrared and red frequencies of light, which boost collagen formation (along with mitochondrial function)

#5: Herbal treatments

For centuries various traditional medicine practices have used three herbs for urinary support: horse-tail, lindera, and three-leaf caper.

More recently, a modern study combining the three herbs showed incredible results.

A randomized clinical trial included women averaging 62 years old who had multiple urinary symptoms.¹ After 8 weeks of taking these three herbs, they experienced a:

- decrease in daily urination episodes from 11.59 times down

to 7.88 times per day—restoring them to normal levels

- 65 percent decrease in incontinence episodes
- 57 percent decrease in urinary urgency episodes
- 43 percent reduction in nighttime urination episodes

Overall, **79 percent** of women reported feeling significant benefits for symptoms related to pelvic floor dysfunction.

Life Extension® has a product that includes all three herbs called

Women's Bladder Support. If you want to try it out, you can purchase it at www.lifeextension.com.

#6: Weight Loss

Last but not least, reducing fat in the abdomen can take physical pressure off your pelvic organs.

If your BMI is over 30 and you are experiencing any level of pelvic floor dysfunction, this will be a crucial step in your treatment and recovery process.

Visit the website for a full reference list.

STOP Popping Ineffective Anti-inflammatory Pills

Resolve Inflammation FOR GOOD

Chronic inflammation wreaks havoc on your body.

It's a precursor to the worst diseases modern mainstream medicine has FAILED to cure.

This includes big ones like heart disease, cancer, dementia, arthritis, autoimmune conditions, and more.

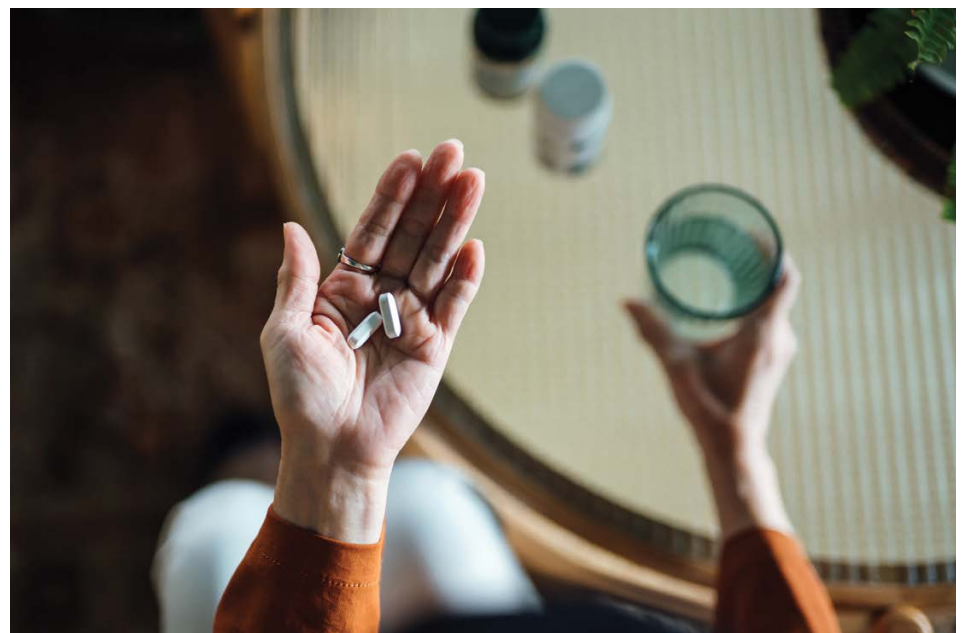
Anti-inflammatories are NOT the solution. Sure, they work in the short term... *but they come with a catch.*

They can lead to stomach ulcers, increased liver enzymes, high blood pressure, heart failure, confusion, and difficulty breathing.

In fact, NSAIDs are responsible for 103,000 hospitalizations and 16,500 deaths yearly!

The problem is that we've been going about the inflammation problem ALL WRONG.

Instead of *reducing* inflammation, we should be working to **RESOLVE** it once and for all. This means taking steps to return



NSAIDs are responsible for 103,000 hospitalizations and 16,500 deaths yearly, as their prolonged use can lead to stomach ulcers, increased liver enzymes, high blood pressure, heart failure, confusion, and difficulty breathing.

inflamed tissues back to their healthy state.

Fortunately, the latest science has revealed exactly how to increase your body's supply of the molecules that **resolve** inflammation *for good*.

The Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde of Healing

They are TWO types of inflammation.

Acute inflammation is the Dr. Jekyll of the pair. It's crucial for health

and survival. Following an infection or tissue injury, your body releases pro-inflammatory lipid mediators that signal the migration of immune cells (white blood cells) to the site of the problem.

Once they eliminate the threat, the inflammation should ideally resolve.

When it works correctly, this process can be LIFESAVING.

But if there's an excessive inflammatory response—or if the inflammation switch gets stuck in the “on” position—the result is *chronic* inflammation, the Mr. Hyde of our tag team.

This chronic, *amplified* inflammation is behind a wide range of acute, ongoing, and systemic inflammatory disorders, ultimately accelerating the aging process itself.

So while *reducing* inflammation with various anti-inflammatory substances is a good start, it's often not enough.

Ideally, you want to resolve the inflammation, which means hitting the “off” switch on the inflammatory response.

Hit the “Off Switch” on Chronic Inflammation

Recently, researchers identified critical molecules that help return cells to a normal, healthy state.

They've been appropriately named **specialized pro-resolving mediators** (SPMs).

SPMs work differently from anti-inflammatories. Instead of *reducing* inflammation (like turning down the dimmer on a light switch), they *resolve* it by hitting the “off” switch.



SPMs resolve inflammation *without* reducing immune system function.



As you might expect, a frenzy of research is looking into synthesizing SPMs in the lab and using them as the “latest, greatest” prescription drug.

After all, an SPM drug gets to the **root** of the inflammatory process—something that's lacking in most of the available meds used to control inflammation-driven diseases.

But here's what they don't want you to know. You DON'T need a prescription drug to boost SPMs.

Instead, you need to give your body the tools it needs to produce SPMs on its own.

Boost Inflammation-Erasing SPMs Naturally

Supplying your body with the *precursors* to SPMs helps ensure that you produce enough to keep inflammation from becoming chronic.

And as it turns out, SPMs are fat-soluble compounds produced from oily substances. This includes the **omega-3 fatty acids** EPA and DHA.

In fact, unless you get plenty of omega-3s, your body CAN'T create sufficient levels of SPMs.

Omega-3s produce a variety of SPMs:

- EPA helps make E-series resolvins.
- DHA helps make D-series resolvins, protectins, and maresins.

Additionally, **arachidonic acids** (omega-6s found in animal-derived foods like meat, poultry, eggs, fish, and dairy) help produce a type of SPM called lipoxins.

How SPMs Work

SPMs work differently than anti-inflammatory drugs because they

Restoring Balance by Boosting Omega-3s

Omega-3 fatty acids like EPA and DHA help combat chronic inflammation by triggering the production of specialized pro-resolving mediators (SPMs).

But that's not the only benefit you'll get from increasing their levels.

Boosting omega-3 can also help restore balance to the **omega-6 to omega-3 ratio**.

The optimal ratio of 1:1 was present during most of human history. But it's become shockingly unbalanced, with a present-day average of 20:1 or even higher.

This is mainly caused by the mass production of seed oils and eating far too many highly processed foods.

This imbalance promotes chronic, low-grade inflammation.

But getting more omega-3s and reducing the omega-6s in your diet will help restore this critical balance, resolving inflammation and ultimately promoting optimal health.

You can ask your doctor to perform an omega-6 to omega-3 ratio test to see where you stand.

resolve inflammation without reducing immune system function.

This is critical because it's the interference with normal immune functioning that **leads** to many of the side effects that can make anti-inflammatory drugs dangerous.

Your body produces a variety of SPMs. They work together to resolve inflammation in several ways.

This includes, in part:

- Putting a stop to the migration of immune cells
- Stopping the production of pro-inflammatory compounds

- Reversing hypersensitivity of nerve endings, which reduces pain
- Starting the repair of damaged tissue
- Returning blood flow to normal

Maresins are a type of SPM produced from DHA that has been particularly well-studied.

They protect cells by limiting neutrophil penetration, enhancing macrophage phagocytosis (which reduces pro-inflammatory factors), stimulating tissue regeneration, and controlling pain.

In addition, maresins reduce free radicals generated by increased blood sugar levels. And animal studies of kidney damage show they can preserve kidney function.

Plus, maresins help with metabolic, nervous system, and inflammatory bowel diseases, as well as tissue regeneration.

Spotlighting the Benefits of SPMs

SPM precursors, like omega-3s, can be used for *ANY condition that involves chronic inflammation.*

By targeting inflammation at its root, SPMs are effective against pain, infection, obesity, IBS, and more.

Here are just a few examples.

Pain

In a randomized, placebo-controlled trial in patients with knee arthritis (a common cause of chronic pain), patients were given supplemental EPA and DHA for 12 weeks.

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Chronic unresolved inflammation in fat cells is linked to insulin resistance, diabetes, and fatty liver disease.

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Participants who received the supplement had significant improvements in pain and function compared to the placebo group.

In an animal study of neuropathic pain, resolvins reduced pain hypersensitivity and inflammation.

In a clinical trial, people with rheumatoid arthritis took EPA and DHA. After 24 weeks, there was significant improvement in pain, morning stiffness, and physical functioning in the treatment group compared to the placebo group.

Obesity, Diabetes, Cancer, and More

Chronic unresolved inflammation in fat cells is linked to insulin resistance, diabetes, and fatty liver disease. And obesity is a risk factor in more than 60 percent of COVID-19 cases.

Research suggests an underlying reason for these increased risks in obese people is a deficiency of SPMs. But bumping up SPM levels could dial down those risks.

For example, protectins, a potent anti-inflammatory SPM, targets obesity and diabetes.

And resolvins suppress tumor growth and enhance cancer therapy.

The Drug-Free Way to Resolve Inflammation

There's no need to wait for a new “wonder drug” to resolve chronic inflammation. You can increase your body's production of pro-resolving mediators simply by **boosting your omega-3s.**

The foods with the highest omega-3s include seafood sources such as salmon, tuna, trout, mussels, oysters, cod, fish eggs, pickled herring, clams, and snow crabs.

In my own life, I've made fishing and seafood gathering my main recreational activity. It gets me outside and provides a continuous source of the SPM boosting omega-3s.

DHA, in particular, absorbs the sun's light converting it into an electric current through the photoelectric effect. This allows us to use even more of the sun's energy to enhance our own wellness.

Visit the website for a full reference list.



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