

COMPLIMENTARY WEBINAR



The Mediterranean Diet and the Immune System: What Are the Potential Effects?

PRESENTED BY

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MS, RD, CDN

May 4, 2023
2-3pm ET

EARN
1 CEU
FREE





Disclosures

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This activity will also award credit for dietetics (CDR CPEU).



Christine Randazzo Kirschner, MS, RDN, CDN

Qualifications

- Co-Founder of Amenta Nutrition
- Registered Dietitian Nutritionist
- Masters of Science in Nutrition, Hunter College
- Monash University-trained in the low-FODMAP diet
- Committee Member of Disorders of the Gut-Brain Interaction Group
- Member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- CDR Certificate of Training in Obesity for Pediatrics and Adults

Affiliations

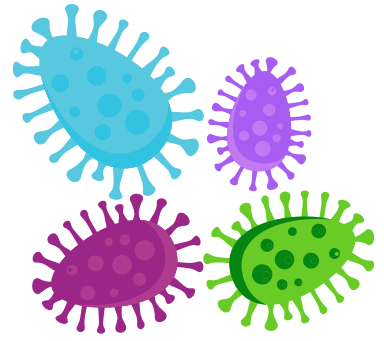
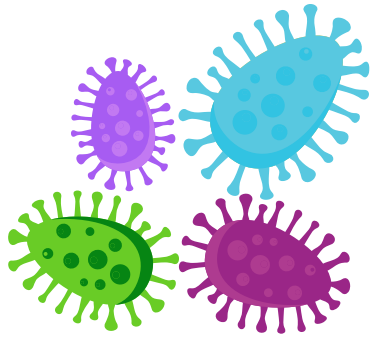
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- Greater New York Dietetic Association
- *Practice Groups:*
 - Dietitians in Medical Nutrition Therapy
 - Dietitians in Gluten & Gastrointestinal Disorders
 - Nutrition Entrepreneurs DPG



Learning Objectives

1. Acquire a basic understanding of the immune system.
2. Recognize which nutrients play a role in supporting the body's immune system.
3. Identify foods found in the Mediterranean Diet that contain important immune-supporting nutrients.

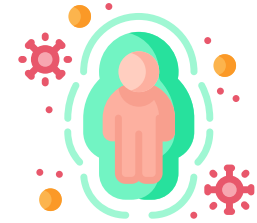
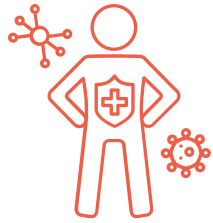
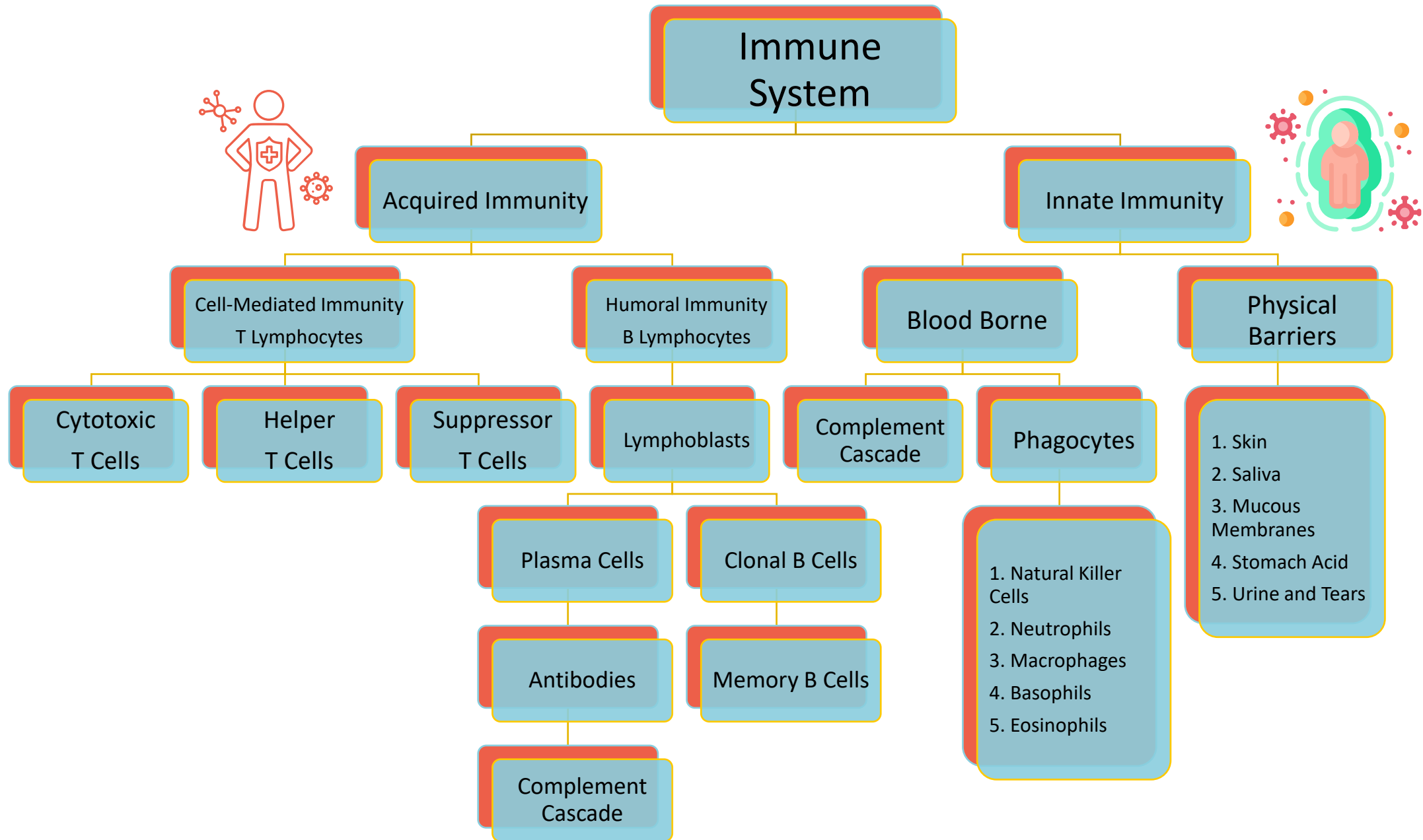
The Immune System



Innate
(non-specific)

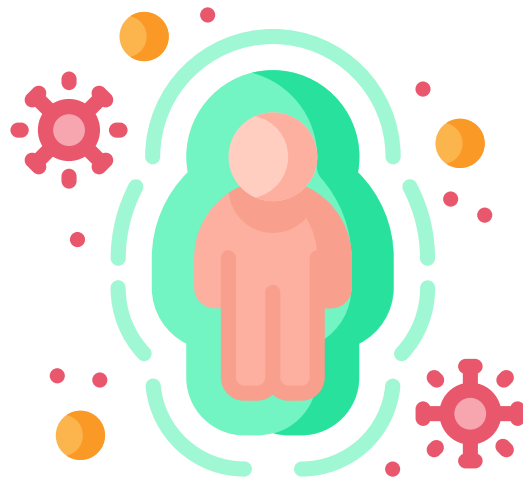
Adaptive
(acquired)





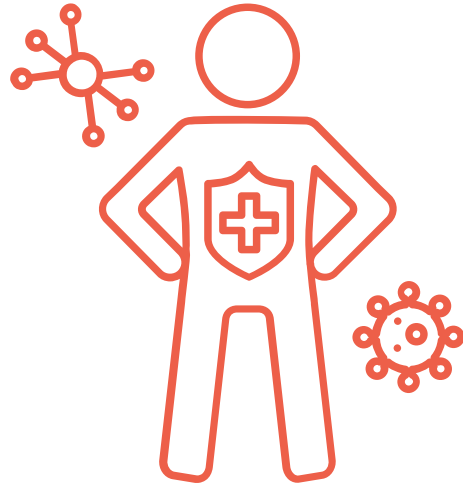
Innate Immune System

- Physical Barriers
 - Skin
 - Gastrointestinal tract
 - Respiratory tract
 - Nasopharynx
 - Cilia
 - Eyelashes and other body hair
- Defense Mechanisms
 - Secretions
 - Mucous
 - Bile
 - Stomach acid
 - Saliva, tears, urine, and sweat

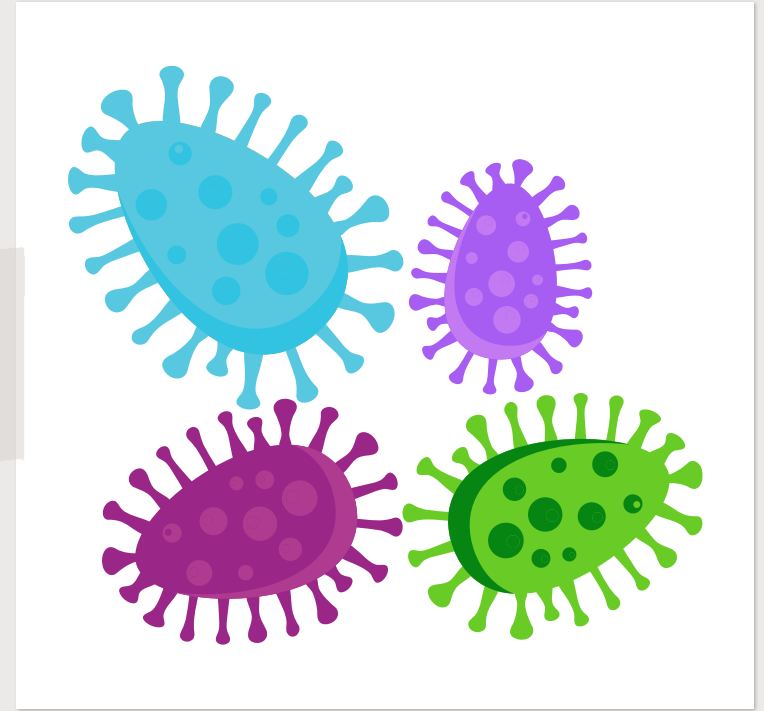
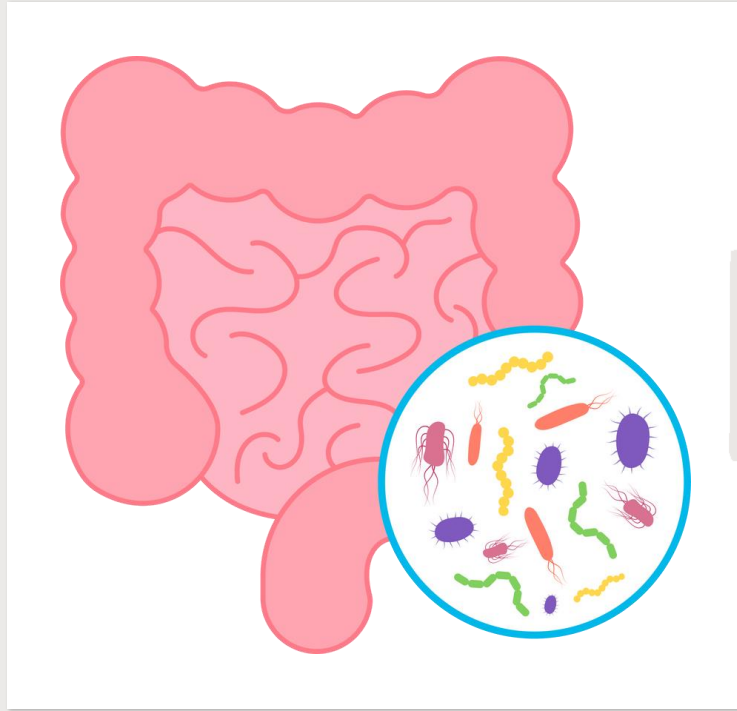
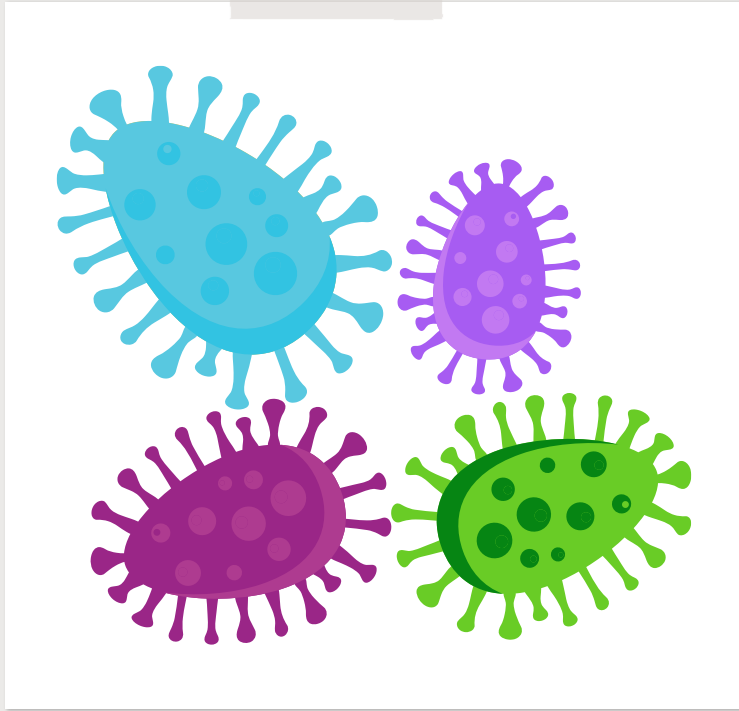


- White Blood Cells/Leukocytes
 - Phagocytes
 - Monocytes/macrophages
 - Mast Cells
 - Neutrophils
 - Eosinophils
 - Basophils
 - Dendritic cells
 - Natural killer (NK) cells
- Innate lymphoid cells
- Endothelial/epithelial cells
- Antimicrobial peptides
- Cytokines (IL-1, IL-10)
- Seric proteins (C-reactive protein)
- Cellular receptors

Adaptive Immune System









- Lymphocyte
 - B Lymphocyte
 - T Lymphocyte
- Antibodies in the blood and other bodily fluids






GI Tract, Gut Microbiota & the Immune System

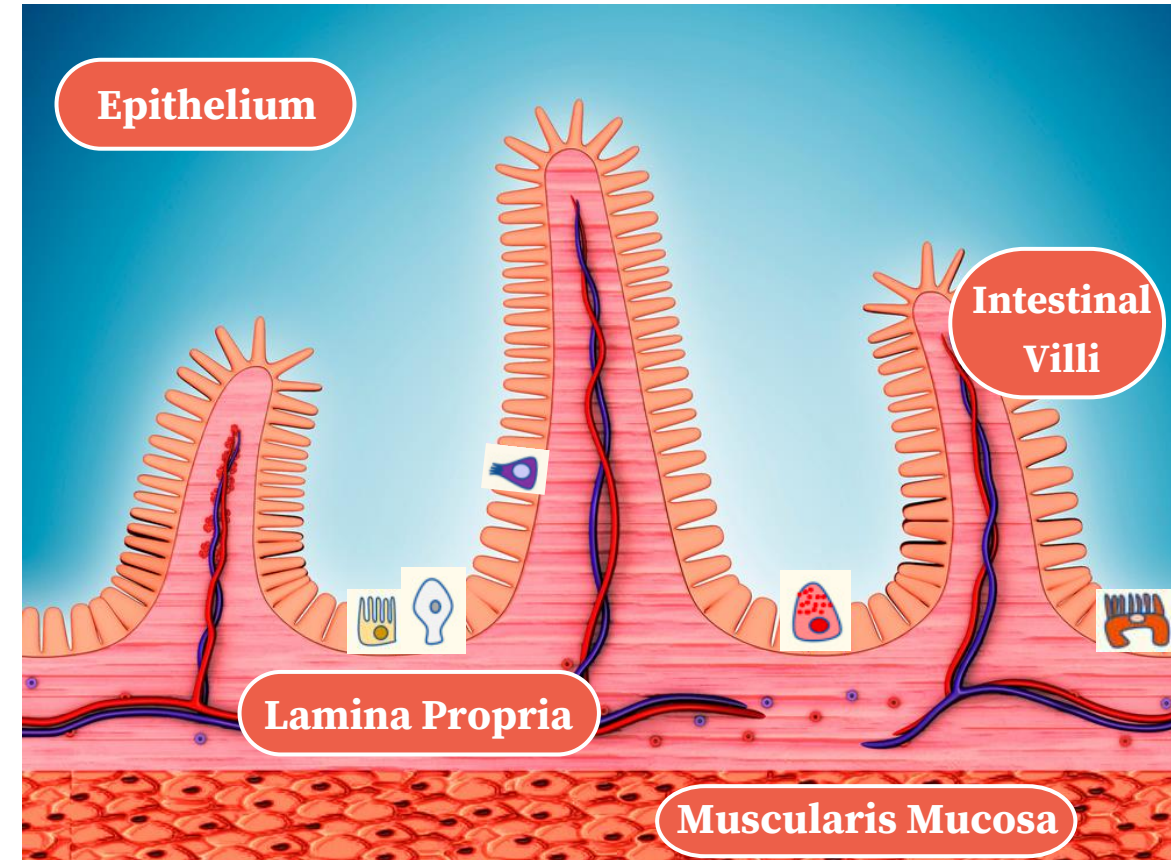
The Mucosa of the Gastrointestinal Tract

Epithelium and Intestinal Villi

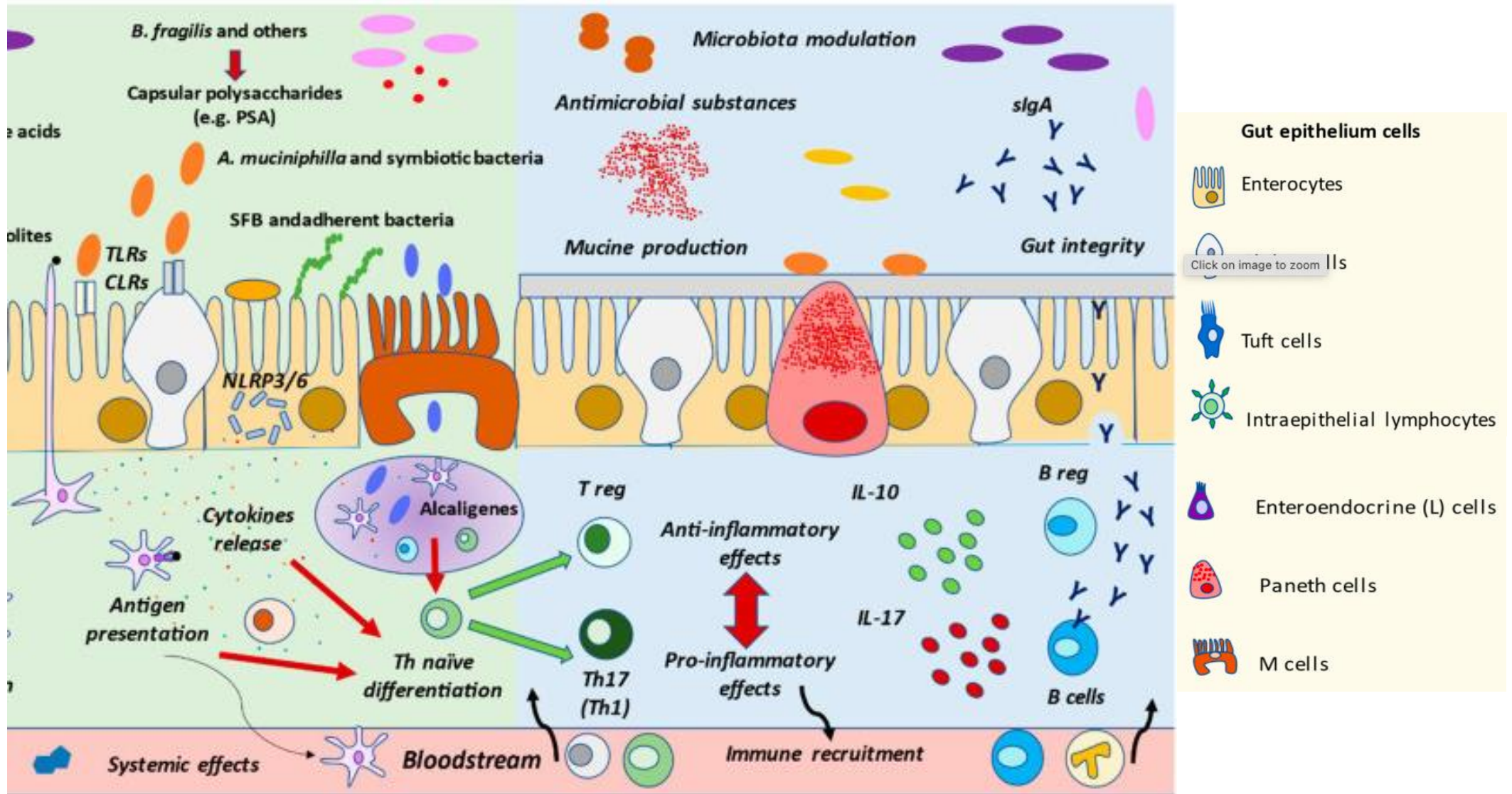
-  **Enterocytes:** intestinal barrier and antigen uptake (absorption of nutrients/entry of substances)
-  **Goblet cells:** production and secretion of mucine
-  **Tuft cells:** as a sensor for host-warns of eukaryotic parasites
-  **Enteroendocrine cells:** hormone-producers, regulate appetite as well as gut microbiota composition and integrity of intestinal epithelium
-  **Paneth cells:** production of antimicrobial peptides → responsible for controlling gut microbiota composition
-  **M cells:** capture and translocation of microbes and molecules from intestinal lumen

Lamina Propria

-  Peyer's Patches:
-  T and B Lymphocytes
-  Dendritic cells, macrophages, mast cells, etc.



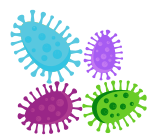
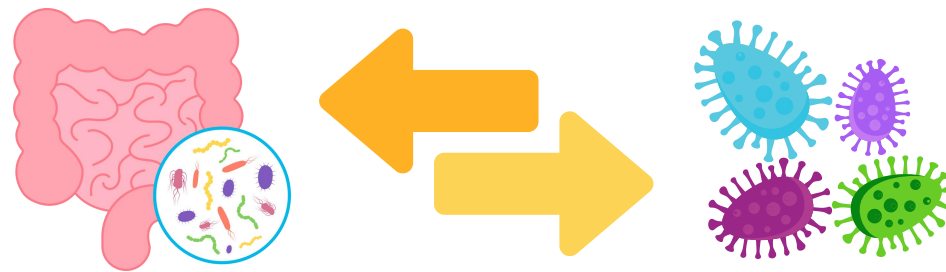
Gut Microbiota & Immune System Interactions



Gut Microbiota & Immune System Interplay

Cells of epithelium and immune cells both have receptors that detect...

- Pathogens
- Microbes
- Metabolic products from microbial communities



Detect pathogens coming from outside and metabolic products from from inside the microbiome

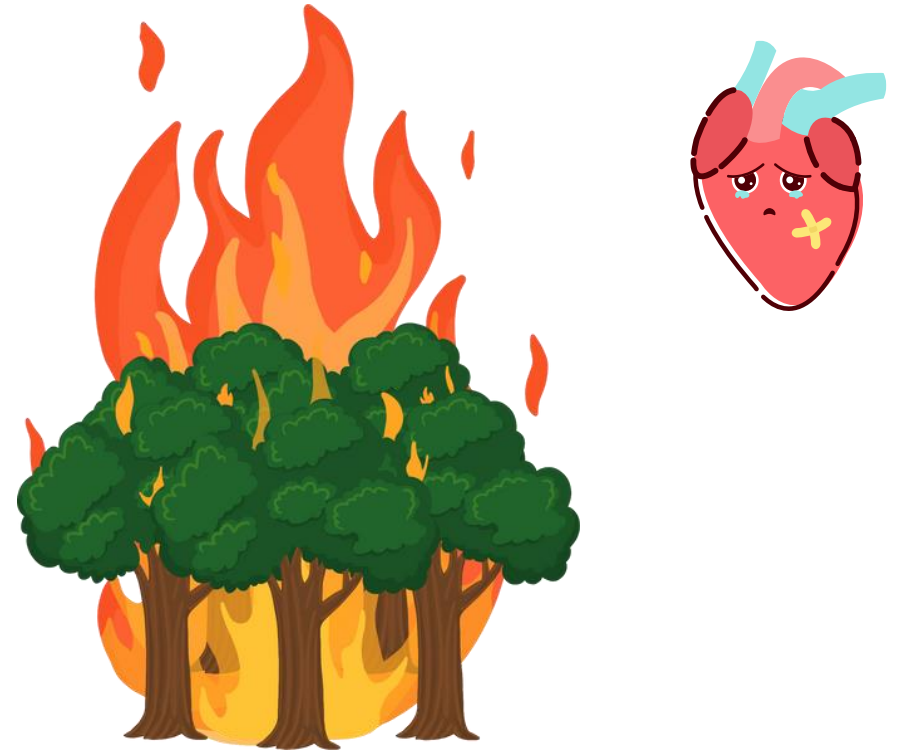
Inflammatory Response



Acute Inflammation



vs



Chronic Inflammation

Acute Inflammation

The Beneficial Kind



- Mechanism of innate immunity
- Protective response involving immune cells, blood vessels, and molecular mediators
- Goals:
 - eliminate initial cause of cell injury
 - clear out necrotic cells and tissues that were damaged
 - Initiate tissue repair

Chronic Inflammation

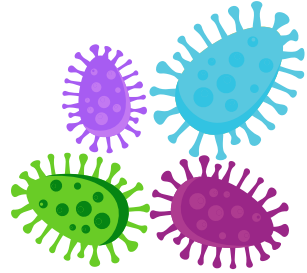
The Damaging Kind

- Chronic inflammation is not a specific disease but a mechanistic process.
- Continued tissue damage and scar tissue formation that progresses silently – major threat to health and longevity
- The World Health Organization (WHO) ranks **chronic inflammatory disease as the greatest threat to human health.**
- Worldwide 3 of 5 people die due to chronic inflammatory diseases such as stroke, chronic respiratory diseases, heart disorders, cancer, obesity, and diabetes.

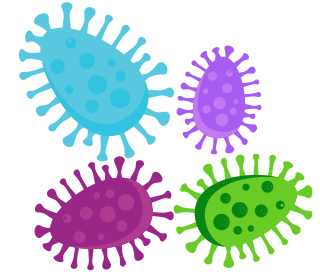


A top-down view of a gourmet charcuterie board. The board is set on a dark wooden cutting board and includes a variety of meats such as salami, prosciutto, and chorizo. There are several types of cheese, including a wedge of blue cheese, a round of soft cheese, and a block of hard cheese. The board is also garnished with fresh bread, green grapes, pomegranate seeds, and various vegetables like bell peppers and olives. Small bowls contain pickles and olives. The entire arrangement is set against a light-colored, textured background.

Nutrients & Food Compounds



Nutrients: Key Players in the Immune System



Vitamin A

Vitamin D

Vitamin C

Vitamin E

Polyphenols

Fiber

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Zinc, Iron, Selenium

Anti-Inflammatory Food Compounds

Dietary Inflammatory Index			
Food Parameter	Weighted number of articles	Raw inflammatory effects score*	Overall inflammatory effect score†
Alcohol (g)	417	-0.278	-0.278
Vitamin B ₁₂ (µg)	122	0.205	0.106
Vitamin B ₆ (mg)	227	-0.379	-0.365
Beta-carotene (µg)	401	-0.584	-0.584
Caffeine (g)	209	-0.124	-0.110
Carbohydrate (g)	211	0.109	0.097
Cholesterol (mg)	75	0.347	0.110
Energy (kcal)	245	0.180	0.180
Eugenol (mg)	38	-0.868	-0.140
Total fat (g)	443	0.298	0.298
Fibre (g)	261	-0.663	-0.663
Folic acid (µg)	217	-0.207	-0.190
Garlic (g)	277	-0.412	-0.412
Ginger (g)	182	-0.588	-0.453
Fe (mg)	619	0.032	0.032
Mg (mg)	351	-0.484	-0.484
MUFA (g)	106	-0.019	-0.009
Niacin (mg)	58	-1.000	-0.246
<i>n</i> -3 Fatty acids (g)	2588	-0.436	-0.436
<i>n</i> -6 Fatty acids (g)	924	-0.159	-0.159
Onion (g)	145	-0.490	-0.301
Protein (g)	102	0.049	0.021
PUFA (g)	4002	-0.337	-0.337
Riboflavin (mg)	22	-0.727	-0.068
Saffron (g)	33	-1.000	-0.140
Saturated fat (g)	205	0.429	0.373

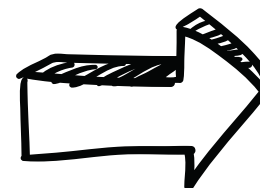


Polyphenols



Flavonoids

- Flavones
- Isoflavones
- Flavonols
- Flavanols
- Beta-Carotene
- Vitamin E
- Vitamin C
- Omega-3s
- Herbs/Spices
- Fiber



Adapted from Shivappa, N., Steck, S. E., Hurley, T. G., Hussey, J. R., & Hébert, J. R. (2014). Designing and developing a literature-derived, population-based dietary inflammatory index. *Public Health Nutrition*, 17(8), 1689–1696.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980013002115>

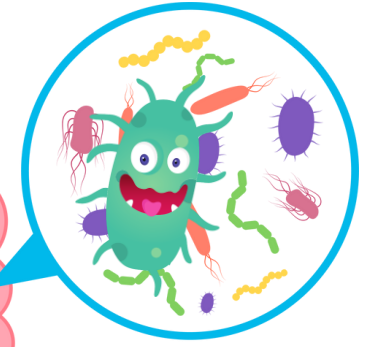
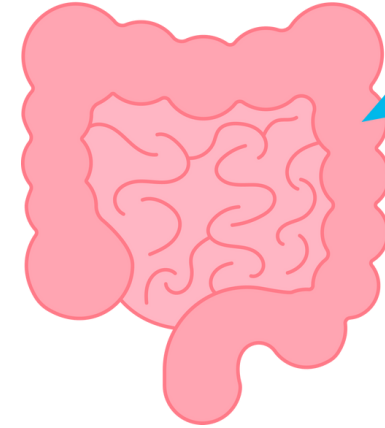
A top-down view of a variety of fiber-rich foods including fruits, vegetables, grains, and legumes. The items are arranged on a dark, textured surface. In the top left, there's a bowl of chickpeas. Next to it are okra and sliced okra. In the top right, there are grapefruit slices and a whole apple. The center features several orange slices and a bowl of oatmeal. To the right of the oatmeal is a head of artichoke and fresh basil. The bottom left shows a bowl of orzo, a whole pear, and sliced sweet potatoes. The bottom center has a bowl of lentils and sliced papaya. The bottom right features a bowl of chickpeas, blueberries, sliced strawberries, and passion fruit. The text "The Role of Fiber" is centered in a white font on a semi-transparent orange background.

The Role of Fiber

Macronutrients: Carbohydrates are the ★!



24hr



Changes in microbiome

Fiber!



Diet has quick effect on:
microbial composition, changes in pH, intestinal permeability, bacterial metabolites



American Gut: An Open Platform for Citizen Science Microbiome Research

ABSTRACT

Although much work has linked the human microbiome to specific phenotypes and lifestyle variables, data from different projects have been challenging to integrate and the extent of microbial and molecular diversity in human stool remains unknown. Using standardized protocols from the Earth Microbiome Project and sample contributions from over 10,000 citizen-scientists, together with an open research network, we compare human microbiome specimens primarily from the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia to one another and to environmental samples. Our results show an unexpected range of beta-diversity in human stool microbiomes compared to environmental samples; demonstrate the utility of procedures for removing the effects of overgrowth during room-temperature shipping for revealing phenotype correlations; uncover new molecules and kinds of molecular communities in the human stool metabolome; and examine emergent associations among the microbiome, metabolome, and the diversity of plants that are consumed (rather than relying on reductive categorical variables such as veganism, which have little or no explanatory power). We also demonstrate the utility of the living data resource and cross-cohort comparison to confirm existing associations between the microbiome and psychiatric illness and to reveal the extent of microbiome change within one individual during surgery, providing a paradigm for open microbiome research and education.

American Gut Project: >30 Plants per Week

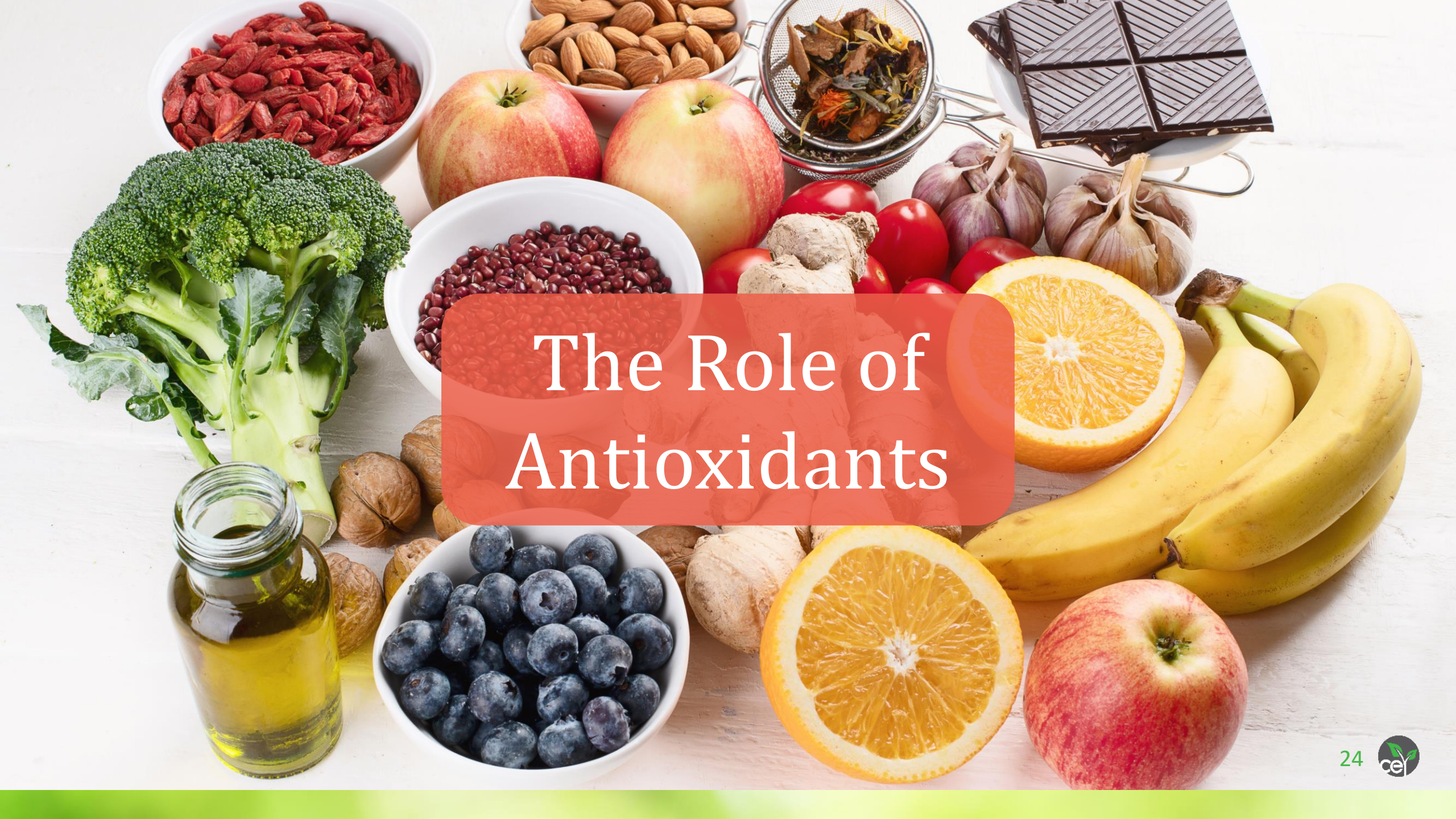
Identified several putative short-chain fatty acid (SCFA) fermenters

Associated with a reduction in certain antibiotic resistance genes

Detected feature was comprised of multiple isomers, including linoleic acid (LA) and conjugated linoleic acid (CLA)

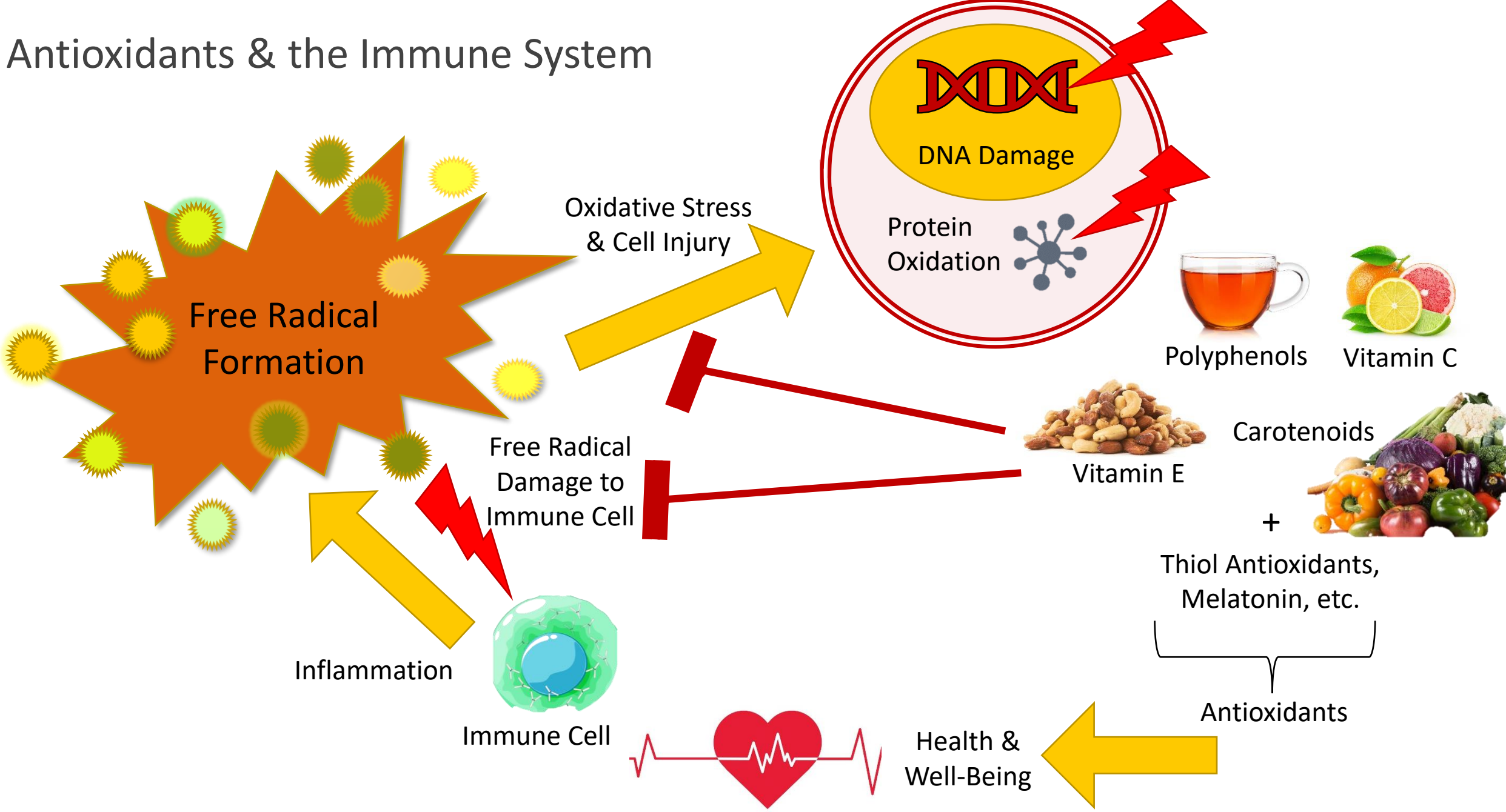
A diet containing various types of dietary fibers and resistant starches likely supports a more diverse microbial community





The Role of Antioxidants

Antioxidants & the Immune System



Adapted from Amir Aslani, B., & Ghobadi, S. (2016). Studies on oxidants and antioxidants with a brief glance at their relevance to the immune system. Life Sciences, 146, 163–173. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lfs.2016.01.014>

A close-up photograph of a light blue ceramic bowl filled with a vibrant salad. The salad consists of fresh green leafy vegetables, several bright red strawberries, and several purple and white edible flowers. The bowl is set against a light, neutral background. A semi-transparent orange-red rounded rectangle is overlaid in the center of the image, containing the title text in white.

The Role of Micronutrients

Micronutrients & the Immune System

Immune Response

Inflammatory and Innate Immune Response

Vitamin A

- Integrity of epithelia
- Differentiation and function of NK-cells
- Promotion of Foxp3+ Treg generation
- Inhibition of Th1/Th17 generation
- Phagocytic and oxidative burst activity of macrophages
- Secretion of the pro-inflammatory cytokines IL-12 and IL-23

Vitamin C

- Barrier integrity
- Scavenger of ROS
- Chemotactic ability and anti-bacterial activity of neutrophils
- Reduction of formation of neutrophil extracellular traps (NETs)

Vitamin D

- Production of antimicrobial peptides
- Modulation of macrophages/monocytes and dendritic cells functions
- Limits over-production of pro-inflammatory cytokines from macrophages (IL1, TNF α)

Zinc

- Maintenance of membrane barrier integrity
- Direct antiviral effects
- Decreases oxidative stress

Omega 3 FA

- Structures of cell membranes
- Inhibition of cytokine production
- Inhibiting neutrophil migration
- Clearance of polymorphonuclear leukocytes

Adaptive Immune Response

Vitamin A

- Growth and differentiation of B cells
- Production of antibodies
- Immunoregulatory function of Treg cells

Vitamin C

- Differentiation and proliferation of B- and T-cells
- Immunostimulator of antibody production (IgM and IgG)
- T-cell maturation via epigenetic mechanisms

Vitamin D

- Limits over-production of pro-inflammatory cytokines from T cells (INF γ , IL2, IL8, IL6)
- Th1 to Th2 shift, increases Th2 cytokines (IL4, IL10)
- Induces differentiation of T reg
- Reduces excessive antibody production

Zinc

- Limits excessive release of pro-inflammatory cytokines (IL-2, IL-6, and TNF- α)
- Enhances the number of T reg

Omega 3 FA

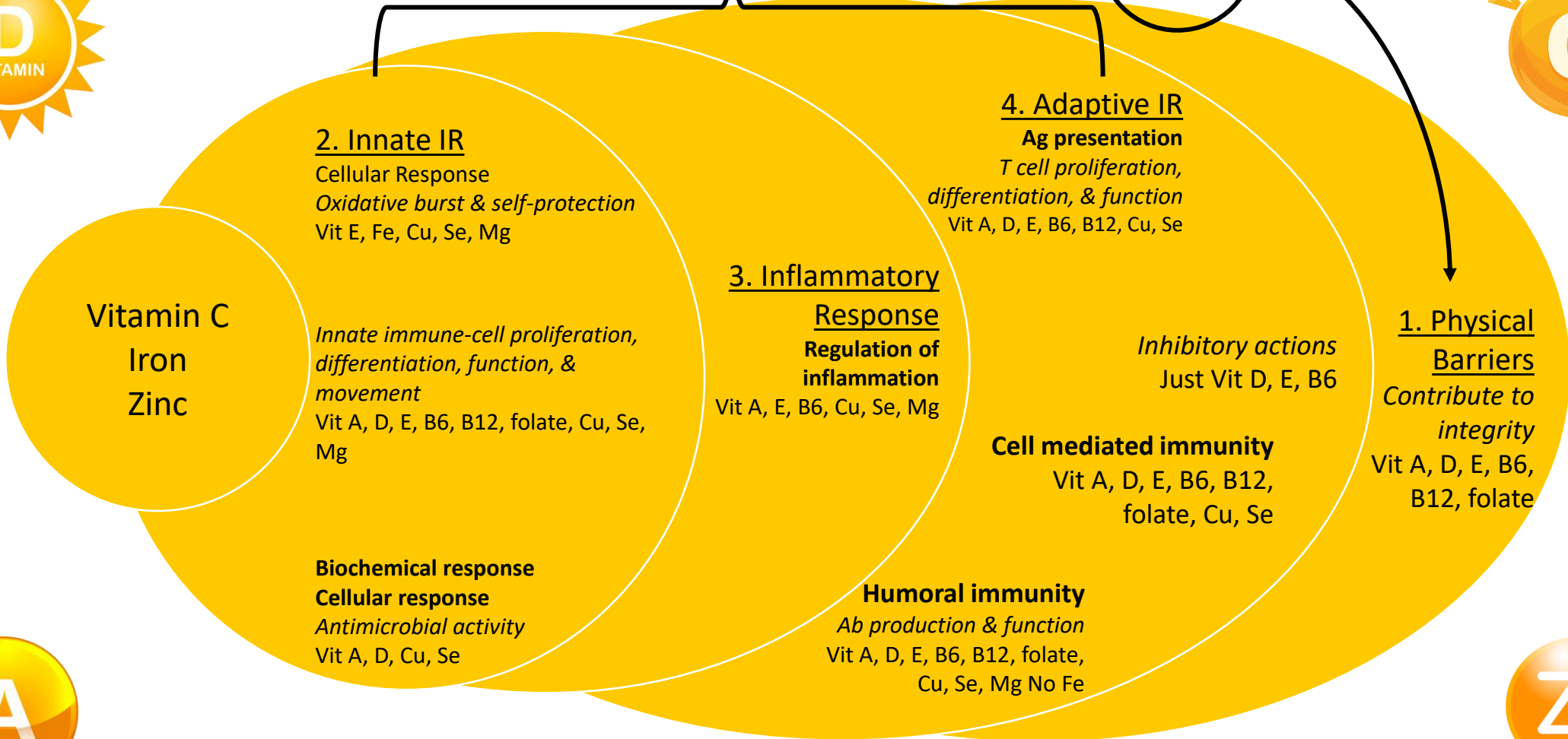
- (specialized pro-resolving mediators (SPMs))
- Treg cells formation
- B cells activation
- Upregulate CCR5 expression





Immune Response

Pathogens





The Role of
High Quality Fats:
MUFA, PUFA, Omega-3s

Dietary Fatty Acids & Immune Response

MUFA

PUFA

- Omega-3 FAs
- Omega-6 FAs



Microbiome
Epithelium
Macrophages
Dendritic Cells
Neutrophils
T-Cells
B-Cells



Decreases:

- Barrier permeability
- Mucus production
- Pro-inflammatory cytokine production
- Oxidative stress

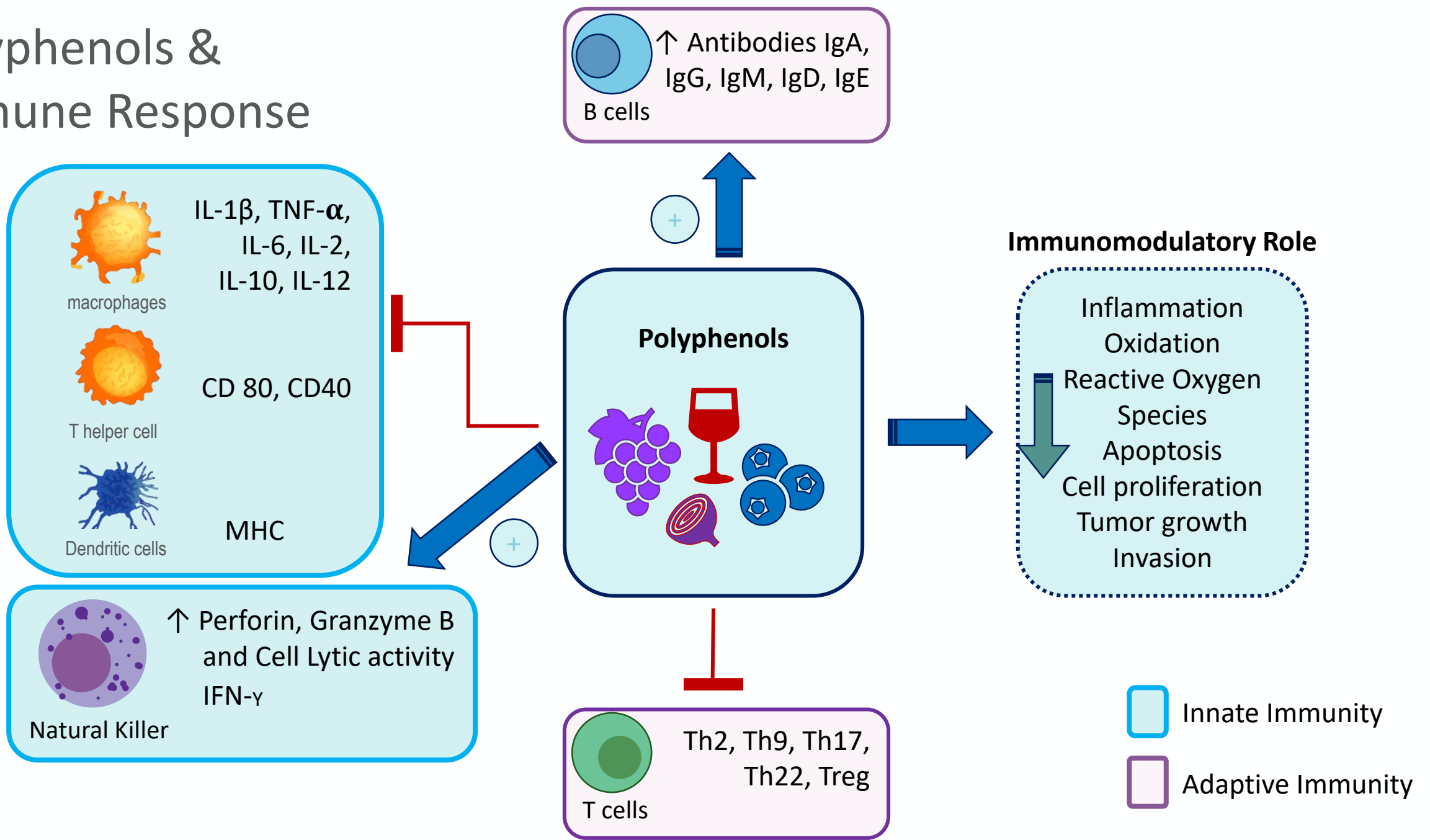
Increases:

- Tight junctions
- Healing



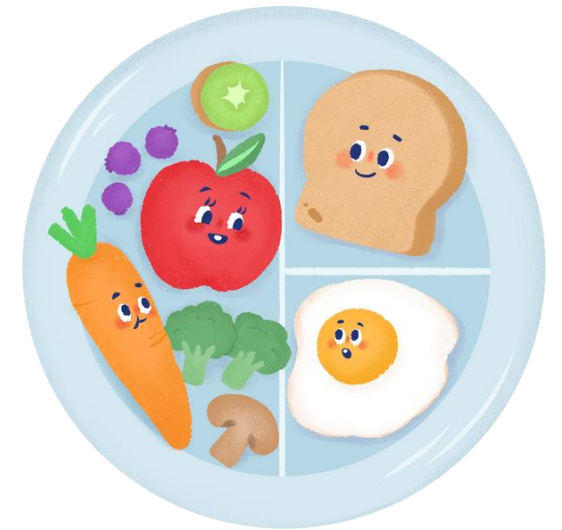
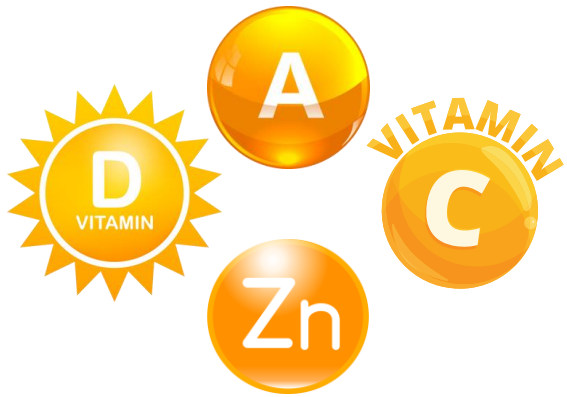
The Role of Polyphenols

Polyphenols & Immune Response



Individual Nutrients vs. Individual Food vs. Overall Eating Pattern:

Which is the Winner?

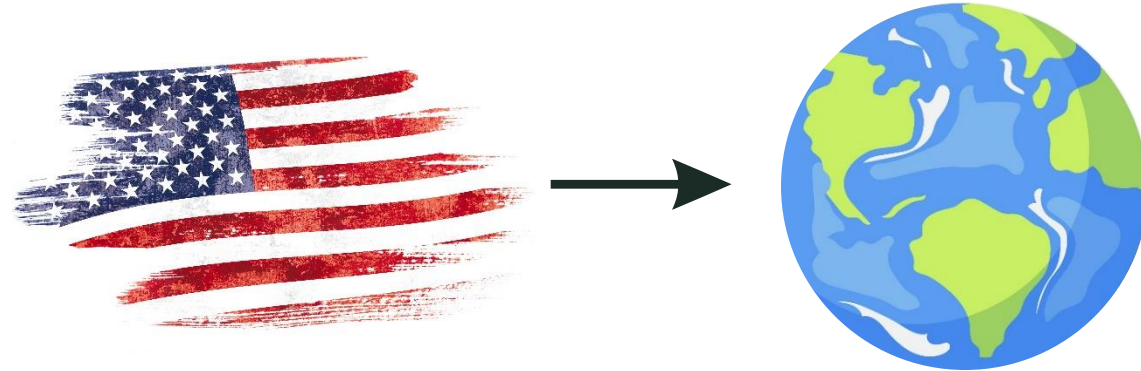




Overall Eating Pattern

(aka, diet 🧑)

The Western Diet:



Low in fiber from...

- Whole Fruits
- Vegetables
- Whole Grains

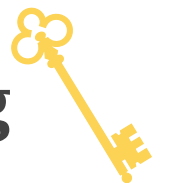
Higher in...

- Saturated Fat
- Salt
- Ultra-Processed Foods (UPF)

Which can lead to chronic diseases like CVD, metabolic syndrome, T2DM, and cancer



It's not only about what you eat, but **what you're not eating**



What is the Mediterranean Diet?



Lifestyle vs. Eating Pattern

- Daily consumption of various fresh vegetables and fruit; nuts, seeds
- Grain products (bread, pasta, rice), mostly whole
- Consumption of legumes several times per week
- Cold pressed extra virgin olive oil for cooking & for seasoning as the main source of fat
- Herbs and spices, adding flavor to dishes
- Fresh fruit daily as dessert; infrequent consumption of sweets, cakes, and dairy desserts
- Fish and seafood (2 to 3 times weekly)
- Daily consumption of dairy, in particular yogurt (small portions of cheese less frequently)
- Eggs, source of high-quality proteins, 2 to 4 times weekly
- Infrequent consumption of red/processed meat, small portions (1-2x/month)
- Water as the main beverage
- Drinking moderate amounts of wine always with meals (Women: ≤ 1 ; for Men: 1-2 drinks/day)
- Preferring fresh, locally produced foods, which have been minimally processed
- **Connection and respect with nature**
- Flavorsome cooking
- Moderate portion sizes
- **Moderate physical active every day**
- **Preparing & consuming meals in the company of other people**
- **Have an appropriate rest (enough time & quality of night-sleep & sleeping for a short period of time during the day if necessary [siesta])**



Dominguez, L. J., Di Bella, G., Veronese, N., & Barbagallo, M. (2021). Impact of Mediterranean diet on chronic non-communicable diseases and longevity. *Nutrients*, 13(6), 2028. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu13062028>

Overall Eating Pattern Includes:

- Plant foods
 - whole grains/cereals
 - seeds, nuts
 - fruits, vegetables
 - beans, legumes
- Olive oil as the principal source of fat
- Limited dairy products
- Moderate amounts of fish, poultry, and wine
- Low amounts of red meat
- Fresh fruit daily

The diet does not single out specific food items or limit calories!

Mediterranean Diet Pyramid

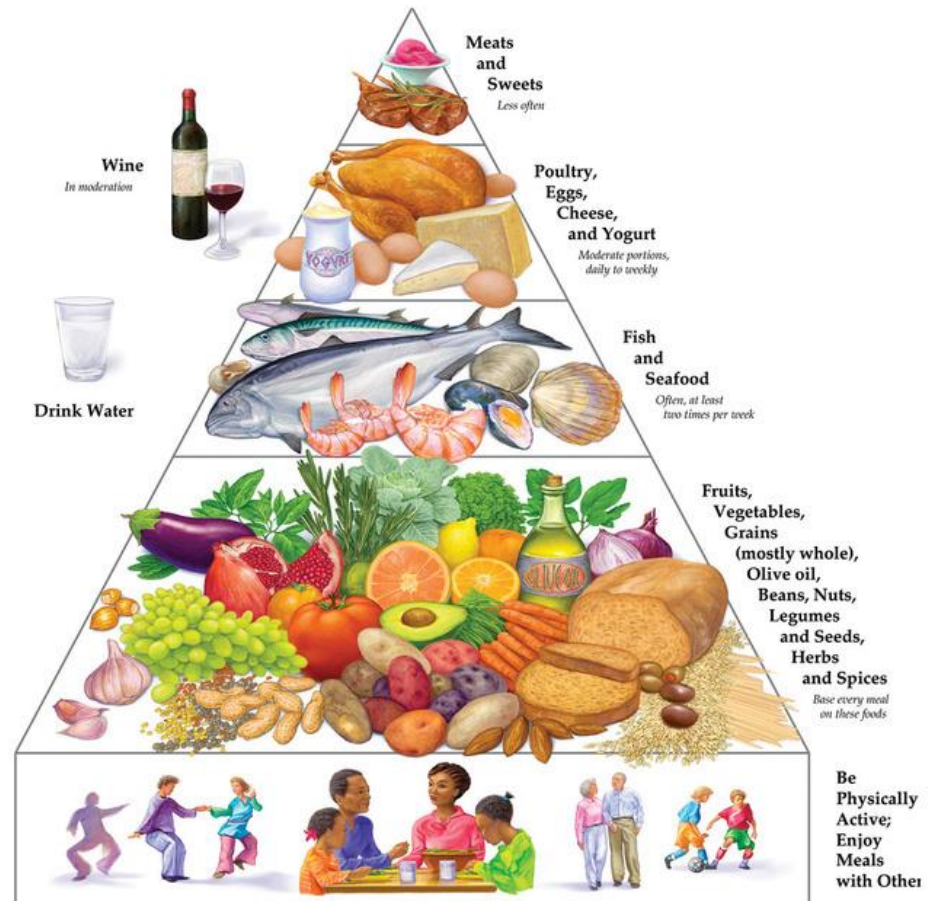


Illustration by George Middleton

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Vegetarian & Vegan Diet Pyramid



Asian Diet Pyramid



Mediterranean Diet-like eating patterns have many faces!

African Heritage Diet Pyramid



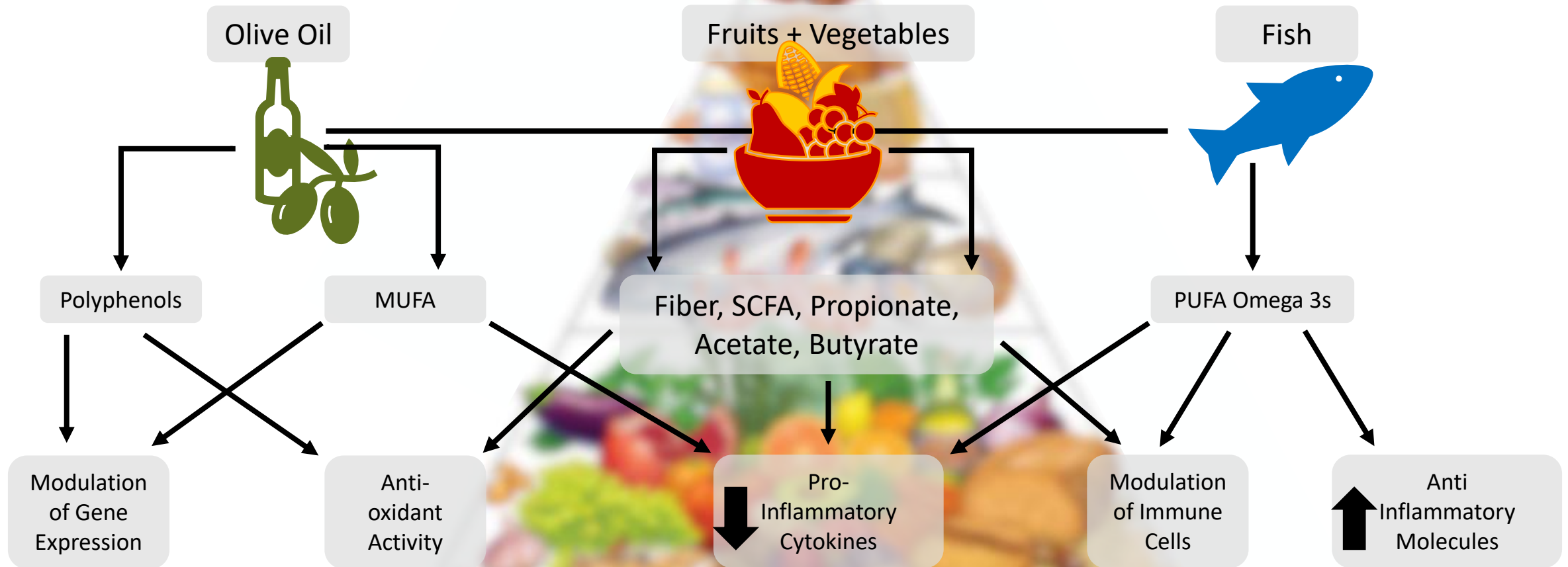
Latin American Diet Pyramid La Pirámide de La Dieta Latinoamericana



A top-down view of a Mediterranean diet platter on a rustic, light-colored stone or ceramic tray. The platter is set against a vibrant, textured blue background. In the upper right, several pieces of golden-brown pita bread are stacked. To their left is a fresh vegetable salad with finely chopped green herbs, white onions, and red tomatoes. Below the bread is a small white bowl filled with bright yellow hummus. In the lower right, another small white bowl contains vibrant pink hummus. The bottom center of the platter features a large dollop of white hummus. To the left of the hummus are several olives, including green and black ones. In the bottom left, there are two halves of a red fig and a yellow bell pepper. In the bottom right, there are several green falafel balls. A few red pomegranate seeds are scattered around the tray. A semi-transparent red banner with white text is overlaid across the center of the image.

Common Nutrients Found in a Mediterranean Diet Eating Pattern

Principle Nutrients in the Mediterranean Diet



Rich in foods and food compounds that have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties

Polyphenols: Anti-Inflammatory & Antioxidant-Rich Foods

Flavones



Isoflavones



Hydroxytyrosol



Flavanols



Herbs/Spices



Flavonols



Other Anti-Inflammatory & Antioxidant-Rich Foods

Beta-Carotene



Vitamin C



Vitamin E



Omega 3s



Zinc



Fiber



Practical Applications During Nutrition Counseling Sessions



Patient's Diet Recall

B: Oatmeal + berries + coffee

L: Salad (romaine, tomatoes, cucumbers, feta, grilled shrimp)
+ side of sliced baguette

S: Apple + saltine crackers

D: Lemon chicken + green beans + Yukon baby potatoes

Ask yourself: where are those
anti-inflammatory foods, antioxidants,
fiber-rich foods, color, etc.?





Patient's Diet Modifications

B: Oatmeal + berries + coffee + **cinnamon + nuts + chia seeds**

L: Salad (romaine, tomatoes, cucumbers, feta, grilled shrimp + carrots + **artichokes + asparagus + fresh basil + lemon vinaigrette**)
+ ~~side of sliced baguette~~ **whole wheat baguette OR lentil soup**

S: Apple + **almond or sunbutter** + saltine crackers **OR hummus + crudité**

D: ~~Pork chop~~ **Grilled Salmon** + green beans + Yukon baby potatoes
(+ oregano) + **cannellini beans w/ cherry tomatoes & garlic**

Global Meal Ideas

Soba noodles + spinach + edamame + shredded cabbage + diced carrots + cucumber + miso dressing + salmon

Chickpea tajine + yam + dates + cauliflower + tomatoes + couscous + almonds

Lentil curry stew + fresh or frozen vegetables + whole wheat naan + cucumber raita + chutney

Corn tortillas + grilled fish + shredded cabbage + lime + cilantro + mint + avocado + tomato





Global Meal Ideas



Meal	Nutrients
Soba Noodles + spinach + edamame + shredded cabbage + diced carrots + cucumber + miso dressing + salmon	<p>Soba: zinc, iron, manganese, thiamin, protein, soluble fiber Olive oil: vit E, MUFA; Spinach: vit E, vit C, iron Edamame: Isoflavones, protein, vit C, calcium, iron, magnesium, copper, fiber, Purple cabbage: vit C, iron, anthocyanins; Carrots: Beta Carotene; Cucumber: Vit K Miso: Isoflavones, Zinc; Salmon: omega 3</p>
Chickpea tajine + yams + dates + cauliflower tomatoes + couscous	<p>Chickpea: fiber, zinc; Couscous: selenium Dates: iron, copper, B6, fiber, polyphenols, antioxidants Cauliflower: vit C, K; Tomato: lycopene, vit C, vit A; Yam: beta carotene Olive oil: vit E, MUFA; Almonds: vit E</p>
Lentil curry stew + fresh or frozen vegetables + rice or whole wheat naan + cucumber raita + chutney	<p>Lentil: protein, iron, zinc, copper, fiber, flavanols & other polyphenols Curry: spices/antioxidants Mixed frozen veg like peas + carrots: vit C, vit A, Zinc (green peas) Cucumber raita: probiotics in yogurt, vit K Whole wheat Naan: vit E, fiber</p>
Corn tortillas + grilled fish + shredded cabbage + lime + cilantro + mint + avocado + tomato	<p>Corn: vit C, fiber Grilled fish: omega 3, protein Purple cabbage: vit C, iron, anthocyanins; Tomato: vit C, vit A, antioxidant, lycopene Lime: vit C; Cilantro, mint: herbs: antioxidant Avocado: vit C, vit E, MUFA; Black beans: fiber, zinc, isoflavones</p>

Pantry Meal Ideas



Frozen shrimp sauteed in olive oil + garlic + red pepper + sauteed frozen kale or spinach + canned tomatoes + grain like farro or polenta

Brown rice + frozen spinach served with poached or crispy egg (or canned salmon) + edamame + seaweed strips + sesame seeds + dash of soy sauce

Veggie chili: canned beans (kidney, black, chickpeas, cannellini) + frozen vegetables (zucchini, corn, carrots) + chili powder, paprika, garlic, onion powder, cumin + canned tomatoes

Shakshuka: canned tomatoes, frozen spinach + cauliflower or other vegetable, chickpeas + spices + eggs



Pantry Meal Ideas



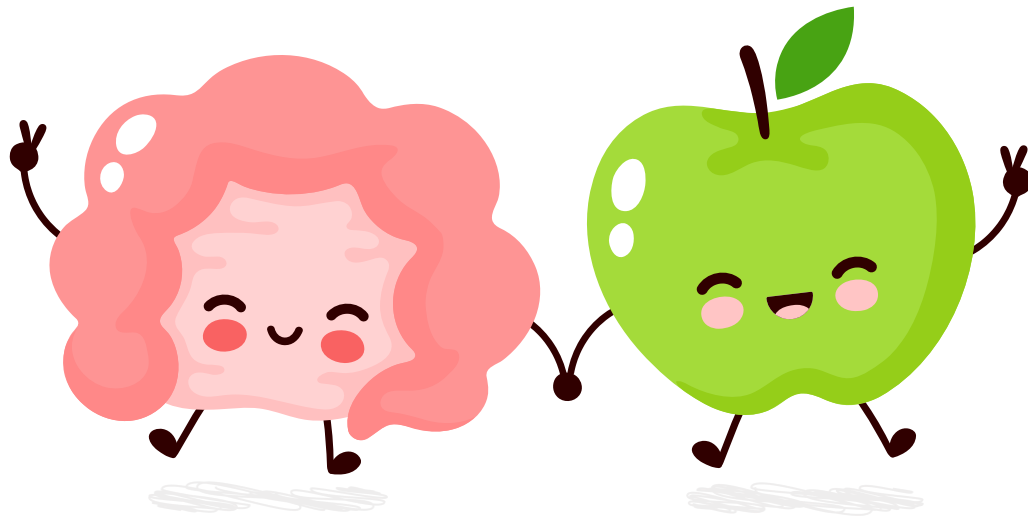
Meal	Nutrients
<p>Frozen shrimp sauteed in olive oil + garlic + red pepper + sauteed frozen kale or spinach + canned tomatoes + grain like farro or polenta</p>	<p>Shrimp: lean protein; Olive oil: MUFA Garlic: flavonol, prebiotic; Red pepper flakes: flavones Kale/spinach: vit E, vit C, iron; Tomatoes: lycopene, vit c, vit A Farro: zinc, fiber, iron, protein, polyphenols, carotenoids, phytosterols and selenium</p>
<p>Brown rice + frozen spinach + poached or crispy egg (or canned salmon) + edamame + seaweed strips + sesame seeds + dash of soy sauce</p>	<p>Brown rice: protein, iron, zinc, copper, B vitamins Frozen spinach: vit E, vit C, iron, vit A Egg: protein, vit A, selenium, zinc, choline; Canned Salmon: omega -3, protein Frozen edamame: Isoflavones, protein, vit C, calcium, iron, magnesium, copper, fiber, Seaweed strips: iodine, vit C, vit A; Sesame seed: zinc, iron, B6, fiber, vit E</p>
<p>Veggie chili: canned beans (kidney, black, chickpeas, cannellini) + frozen veggies (zucchini, corn, carrots) + chili powder, paprika, garlic, + onion powder, + canned tomatoes + cumin</p>	<p>Canned beans: iron, isoflavones, fiber, protein, zinc Zucchini: vit A, C; Corn: vit C, B vitamins, zinc; Carrots: vit A Spices: antioxidants, flavones; Olive oil or canola: MUFA, vit E, Cumin: flavonoids (quercetin) Onion: prebiotic, flavonols; Garlic: prebiotic, flavonols; Canned tomatoes: lycopene, vit c, vit A</p>
<p>Shakshuka: canned tomatoes, frozen spinach + cauliflower or other veg, chickpeas + spices + eggs</p>	<p>Canned tomatoes: lycopene, vit c, vit A Spinach: vit E, vit C, iron, vit A, Cauliflower: vit C, K, B6, folate Canned chickpeas: zinc, fiber, protein; Dried spices: antioxidants, flavones Eggs: protein, vit A, selenium, zinc, choline</p>



Key Takeaways

- Increase your intake of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, seeds, fish, poultry, & legumes
- Use a plant-based oil as staple cooking oil
- Pay particular attention to foods high in antioxidants, polyphenols, and other anti-inflammatory compounds
- Omega-3 fats: salmon, trout, mackerel, soy, walnuts, and flaxseeds
- High-fiber foods encourage friendly gut microbes to help reduce inflammation
- Avoid charring foods when cooking at high temperatures
- Limit inflammatory foods: red/processed meats, fried fatty foods, saturated fats, foods & drinks w/ added sugar, refined carbohydrates, and ultra-processed foods

Questions?



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