

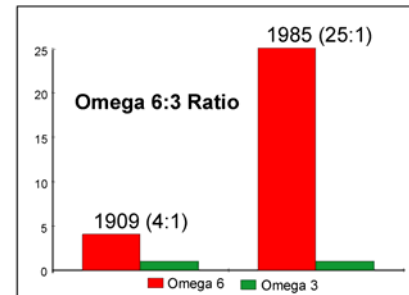
## *The Anti-Inflammatory Diet*

### How the “Western” Diet Promotes Inflammation

**Saturated Fats** (Source of Arachidonic Acid)  
Over the past 100 years the American diet has changed. We now eat a higher percentage of animal products that include meat and dairy. One of the major building blocks of inflammatory agents in the body comes from Arachidonic acid, which we consume in the form of animal foods. Studies of inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis have shown improvement of symptoms in those who ate small amounts of meat and dairy (vegan diet).

**Polyunsaturated Fats** (A shift from natural to synthetic)

Essential fatty acids (omega-6 and omega-3) cannot be made in the human body and are required in our diets for proper function. Both are involved in the inflammatory process. Omega-6 fatty acids, in general, lead to the production of more inflammatory chemicals, and omega-3 result in less inflammatory chemicals. The ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids in our diet has greatly increased due to the introduction of vegetable oils and food preservation. In order to reduce the amount of saturated fats in our diet, the food industry created more stable polyunsaturated fats in the form of “trans-fatty” acids and partially hydrogenated oils. The introduction of these oils has led to longer shelf life for many baked products (crackers, Twinkies) and has increased the amount of omega-6 FA in our diet. The breakdown of trans-fatty acids also leads to free radical formation that can lead to damage of blood vessels and to the production of more inflammatory agents. A diet high in omega-6 fatty acids prevents the body from using the less inflammatory omega-3 fatty acids. To help improve inflammation, the ratio needs to be reduced back to 4:1.



### Changing to a Less Inflammatory Diet

#### Reduce amount saturated fats (arachidonic acid)

- Animal products (except cold water fish)
- Dairy products

#### Reduce amount of omega 6 fatty acids

- Margarine
- Corn oil, Cottonseed oil, Grapeseed oil, Peanut oil, Safflower oil, Sesame oil, Soybean oil, Sunflower oil, partially hydrogenated oils. (Use monounsaturated oils for cooking such as olive or canola oil)
- Any products that have a long shelf life (crackers, pastries, chips)

#### Increase amount of omega 3 fatty acids

- Cold water fish (Salmon, Mackerel, Sardines, Herring)
- Flax seeds or oil (go bad quickly so keep refrigerated and use promptly)
- Walnuts
- Green leafy vegetables

#### Avoid prolonged use of “low carbohydrate” diets (high in fat)

- Atkins

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