

Inflammation and Ageing

The Silent Driver of Degeneration

A practical guide to understanding and easing 'inflammageing'

As we get older, many of the long-term health issues we may face—such as joint stiffness, heart problems, or changes in memory—share a common cause. This hidden factor is called chronic low-grade inflammation, sometimes referred to as “inflammageing”. It's a steady, silent process that can affect the body over many years. But the good news is, it's not something we simply have to accept. There are practical, science-based steps we can take to reduce it and support healthy ageing.

1. What is Inflammageing?

Inflammageing describes a long-term, low-level form of inflammation that continues inside the body, even when we're not ill or injured. It's a sign that the immune system isn't switching off properly. Over time, this can slowly damage our cells and organs, leading to age-related health problems.

2. What Contributes to It?

Many factors play a part in long-term inflammation. These include:

- Carrying excess weight, especially around the middle
- A diet high in processed foods, sugars, and unhealthy fats
- Not moving enough during the day
- Ongoing stress or anxiety
- Poor sleep or sleep disturbances
- Gut health imbalances
- Exposure to pollutants or toxins in the environment

3. What Can We Do About It?

The encouraging news is that small lifestyle changes can have a big impact. Here are three key areas to focus on:

- **Keep Moving:** - Regular physical activity helps lower inflammation levels in the body. Both gentle aerobic movement—such as walking or swimming—and strength-based exercise are helpful. Movement also supports muscle strength, balance, and reduces visceral fat, which plays a key role in inflammation.
- **Eat to Nourish** - Some foods can support the body's natural anti-inflammatory processes. Try to include:
 - Leafy greens, colourful vegetables, berries
 - Oily fish, olive oil, turmeric
 - Fermented foods for gut health
 - Reducing processed foods, added sugar, and saturated fats also helps. It's not about cutting everything out—it's about adding more of the good things in.

Support Your Nervous System - Stress affects the immune system and can increase inflammation over time. Tools like mindfulness, slow breathing, stretching, and getting good quality sleep can help regulate the body's stress response. Even a few minutes each day can make a difference.

A Positive Approach to Ageing. Inflammation isn't just something that happens because we're getting older—it's something we can influence. Through regular movement, a balanced diet, and calming the nervous system, we can ease inflammation and feel more in control of our long-term health.

Everyday Actions That Make a Difference

Small daily habits are powerful when they're done consistently. Here's how you can build your resilience and reduce inflammation:

1. **Move every day.** It could be a walk, light strength session, stretching, or active housework. Movement helps regulate inflammatory pathways.
2. **Eat with intention.** Include a variety of plants, healthy fats, and gut-supportive foods. Avoid food that leaves you feeling sluggish or bloated.
3. **Sleep regularly.** Aim for 7–9 hours per night. A consistent routine supports recovery and immune balance.
4. **Prioritise calm.** Use simple relaxation practices during the day—deep breathing, mindful pauses, or outdoor breaks.
5. **Minimise ultra-processed food.** These keep the immune system in a constant state of alert.
6. **Stay hydrated.** Water supports detoxification, brain clarity, and joint lubrication.

Final Thoughts

Chronic inflammation is one of the most significant, yet modifiable, contributors to poor health in later life. The good news is that we are not passive participants. Through informed choices in movement, nutrition, sleep, and emotional regulation, we can influence how we age. Ageing well doesn't require perfection—it requires consistency. By learning how your body responds to lifestyle factors and making sustainable adjustments, you build resilience from the inside out.

Support and next steps:

Consider working with a qualified health professional who understands ageing and inflammation. Whether through an exercise plan, nutritional support, or stress management techniques, you have the tools to shape your own health span—not just your lifespan.

Small, steady steps work best. With a consistent approach, we can age with more ease, energy, and resilience. There is more information and documents on the webpage:

<https://www.rbhfitness.co.uk/freedownloads>