

THE ARTHRITIS **COACH**

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10 FOODS YOU MUST AVOID IF YOU HAVE ARTHRITIS

**PLUS: 5 FOODS THAT CAN HELP
REDUCE ARTHRITIS PAIN**

10 Foods to Avoid

Certain foods stimulate an inflammatory response, and certain foods suppress an inflammatory response.

For individuals not diagnosed with arthritis, “research suggests that including anti-inflammatory foods in your diet and limiting foods that trigger joint pain” may help ward off the disease.”

Other research cites obesity as a primary risk factor for arthritis, while consumption of inflammatory foods correlates with obesity rates.

1. GLUTEN & WHEAT

Gluten and wheat both produce an inflammatory response, particularly in folks who are intolerant to either. A leaky gut – or increased gut permeability – has been linked to joint pain in many studies.

A leaky gut allows toxins and waste to enter the bloodstream via the intestines; these harmful byproducts are seen as a threat, and the body initiates an immune response. The immune response is what leads to inflammation; sometimes targeting areas in and around the joints.

2. DAIRY

Many dairy products contain a type of protein called casein. Per a study conducted by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, casein protein may irritate tissue around the joints.

3. CORN OIL

Corn oil or, to be more precise, any food with high doses of omega-6 fatty acids (baked goods or baked snacks among them) can produce inflammation. It is quite easy to overindulge on this fatty acid because so many foods contain it.

Corn oil isn't the only industrial oil to refrain from consuming. All oils derived from seeds – cottonseed, canola, grapeseed, soybean, safflower, rice bran, and sunflower oil, should also be avoided.

4. FRIED & PROCESSED FOODS

Per a study conducted at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, reducing consumption of fried and processed foods “can reduce inflammation and actually help restore the body’s natural defenses regardless of age or health status.”

The same study also provides dietary recommendations to prevent other diseases.

5. SALT & PRESERVATIVES

Many foods produced today include excessive amounts of salt and preservatives; the former makes some foods more palatable, and the latter artificially extends a product’s shelf life. Regardless, consuming too much salt and preservatives may produce inflammation within the joints.

Prepared foods, including of the frozen and microwavable varieties, are often loaded with salt, preservatives, and additives.

6. 'AGES'

There's no relation to the number of years you've lived, despite the name. AGE is an acronym for an advanced glycation end product – a toxic byproduct resulting from fried, grilled, heated, or pasteurized foods.

Certain proteins in the body are “attacked” upon consuming AGE foods. Predictably, this stimulates an autoimmune response. Cytokines are inflammatory messengers released by the autoimmune system to protect against further damage caused by AGEs and other harmful agents. Cytokines directed to areas within or around joints exacerbates arthritis symptoms by increasing inflammation.

7. CERTAIN VEGETABLES

Surprising to see that some veggies are not recommended, huh?

The plant name for these vegetables is Solanaceae – aka Nightshades – and they contain solanine, a type of compound that produces adverse physiological reactions in arthritis patients. Consuming vegetables like eggplant, peppers, potatoes, and tomatoes can worsen arthritis pain.

If you're a fan of sweet potatoes, here's some great news: they're not within this class of vegetables, and are okay to eat.

8. SUGAR

Nobody likes having to give up the occasional sugary treat, but processed sugars (similar to AGEs) release cytokines – molecules that stimulate inflammation.

Sugar is an “umbrella term” for other types of derivative ingredients; namely, ingredients that end in “ose,” such as fructose, glucose, and sucrose, among others.

9. REFINED CARBOHYDRATES

Refined carbohydrates; mainly white flour products, white potatoes, white rice, and most cereals are high-glycemic index (HGI) foods. HGI foods incite the production of byproducts (including AGEs), which worsens inflammation.

Additionally, per an article published by Scientific American, refined carbs “may increase the risk of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease more than fat does.” As mentioned, obesity is among the primary risk factors of arthritis.

10. ALCOHOL & TOBACCO

Alcohol and tobacco use has been linked to development of certain arthritis types. Per healthline.com, “Studies have shown that environmental factors play a part in who develops (rheumatoid arthritis) and that smoking is a big risk factor.”

A link has been discovered between levels of alcohol use and chances of developing gout.

5 Foods to Add

Now that we have identified and are actively avoiding food that triggers inflammation, we can turn our attention to nutritional healing.

With that in mind, here are 5 foods that may help significantly reduce arthritis pain.

1. APPLES

Apples are loaded with two powerful bioflavonoids, quercetin and rutin. Both inhibit the release of histamine; protect the body from inflammation; boost blood circulation, and promote cellular health.

Other excellent sources of quercetin and rutin include chamomile tea, celery, capers, citrus fruits (orange, grapefruit, lemon, lime), cranberries, green peppers, and onions.

2. ALMONDS

Make that a second non-meat source! Almonds are the most abundant source of vitamin E at 7.3 milligrams (mg) per ounce. Vitamin E helps stabilize cell membranes and, together with zinc, promotes the growth of cartilage.

Other top sources of vitamin E include spinach, sweet potatoes, avocado, wheat germ, palm oil, butternut squash, and sunflower seeds!

3. COLD WATER FISH

Cold water fish contain abundant amounts of omega-3 fatty acids, which have potent anti-inflammatory properties. Omega-3's contain eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), also known as marine fatty acids. EPA and DHA suppress the body's inflammatory response by interfering with immune cells and enzymes involved in it.

The best marine omega-3s are salmon, tuna, sardines, and mackerel. Vegans and vegetarians can acquire omega-3s through flaxseed, chia seeds, soy, kale, and other plant-based sources.

4. EGGS

The protein in eggs can significantly increase the levels of tryptophan in the blood. Tryptophan is the building block of serotonin; the brain chemical that both stabilizes mood and boosts pain threshold. Tryptophan also raises endorphin levels in the brain and body!

Cheese, salmon, and turkey are also excellent sources of tryptophan. Vegan and vegetarian options include nuts and seeds, pineapples, and tofu.

5. LAMB

Lamb is an excellent source of zinc, an essential mineral with many functional roles in the human body. According to the Arthritis Association, “Studies show significantly lower zinc levels in people with rheumatoid arthritis compared to those without it.” Individuals whose tests revealed “the lowest levels (of zinc)” tended to have it worse off.

Other meat sources of zinc include seafood, red meat, and poultry. Fortified cereals; bean, nuts, seeds (especially pumpkin!), and whole grains are good non-meat sources of the mineral.

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