

A photograph of a person's torso and arms in a grocery store, pushing a shopping cart filled with fresh produce like cabbages and leafy greens. The person is wearing a grey patterned top and a brown tote bag. The background shows various vegetable displays.

## EATING WELL

The saying you are what you eat is true. Research shows that the decisions you make about what and how you eat can have a profound impact on your overall health and wellness, both mentally and physically – not to mention the way you and your body are prepared to cope with arthritis symptoms. **The good news is that you likely don't need a specifically tailored "arthritis diet": most general dietary recommendations for healthy eating apply equally well to people living with arthritis.**

**When it comes to making modifications to your existing diet, keep in mind that very restrictive food regimens are almost impossible to adhere to in the long run.** But even small changes you make to embrace healthy eating habits can make an incremental improvement to your overall health, and in turn improve your ability to live well with arthritis.

The best way to make an informed plan for healthier eating is to consult with your physician and, where possible, with a registered dietitian. Before you start a new food program, remember that your body needs protein for stamina, and healthy fats for energy and to metabolize nutrients. Your calorie intake is also important — if you restrict your calorie intake too much your metabolism can slow down, leading to fatigue and foggy thinking.

**Note that these recommendations are not about "dieting" or eating specifically to lose weight: while many people with arthritis are carrying more weight than is good for their joints, some people with certain conditions or taking certain medications may have trouble keeping weight on.**

The goal is to make healthy nutrition choices about what, when and how you eat, giving your body the fuel and building blocks you need to stay active and feeling good.

HOW YOU EAT MATTERS

EXPERIMENT AND KEEP TRACK

FOOD AND MOOD

SO WHAT SHOULD I EAT? GENERAL GUIDELINES

SO WHAT SHOULD I EAT? SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

**WHAT'S TO DRINK?**

WHAT ABOUT SUPPLEMENTS?

STAY IN TOUCH

## HOW YOU EAT MATTERS

In addition to being careful about what foods you eat, it's important to pay attention to when, and how, you eat. There are seven key things to keep in mind that can help keep your body healthy.

### You Are How You Eat

In addition to being careful about what foods you eat, it's important to pay attention to when, and how, you eat. There are seven key things to keep in mind that can help maintain your body healthy.

#### 1. Listen to your body

**Learn to pay attention to your body's signals. It will let you know when to start and stop eating.** When you feel like a snack, take a second and think about why — is it physical hunger, boredom or simply a need for comfort? **If it's not physical hunger, see if you can meet your needs another way.**



#### 2. Pause before you're full

Your body takes some time to register how full it is. Before taking a **second serving, wait a few minutes.** You may find that you're still hungry, in which case go ahead — **but you may find that in fact, you don't need any more and are satisfied.**



#### 3. Regulate your portion size

Serve out a slightly smaller portion than you might normally. You can always go back for more, but we tend to keep eating if there's food in front of us, even if we're no longer hungry. For treats like chips or ice cream, serve yourself a bowl rather than eating from the bag or carton.



#### 4. Don't skip meals

Eating regularly will keep your blood sugar stable and your metabolism working properly. When we go too long between meals or healthy snacks, we tend to over compensate and end up over eating.



5. Keep healthier choices handy

**Convenience and junk food are often an easy fix if we're feeling hungry**, so try to plan ahead and have healthy snacks available for when you get busy. Pre-cut vegetables, seeds and nuts are easy junk food substitutes.



6. Make it easy

**If fatigue or pain make it difficult to do a lot of prep work, take advantage** of pre-chopped vegetables — fresh or frozen — and prepared salads. If your budget allows, you can also consider a meal prep delivery service which provides all the ingredients you need to make a single meal or a batch of meals. Additionally, you can get great tips from Arthritis-Friendly Home: Meals Made Easy, which provides shortcuts and tricks to make healthy eating easy. <https://www.arthritis.ca/living-well/optimized-self/arthritis-friendly-home/arthritis-friendly-home-meals-made-easy>



7. Ask an expert

Any change to your diet should be discussed with your healthcare professional. This will minimize the risks of unforeseen complications or interactions with medications.



Registered dietitians or nutritionists can provide assistance if you experience any complications or interactions. They are a reliable source of information on diet, vitamins, food and nutrition, and they can help you make healthy food choices to achieve your goals.

Consider where you get your advice however. Anyone, whether they have specialized training or not, can call themselves a nutritionist. A registered dietitian has a four-year university degree in nutrition and dietetics, an internship or master's degree **and is registered with a provincial dietitians' regulatory college**. Furthermore, to keep their registration up-to-date and their skills in line with changes in the profession, **a registered dietitian has to fulfill continuing education requirements**. Ask your doctor to refer you to a registered dietitian.

Summary

Eating well is not about dieting, and it can't be achieved in a day. Listen to your body and make realistic changes that you can stick to - you're in this for the long haul!

## EXPERIMENT AND KEEP TRACK



Instead of trying to make radical changes to your diet which are impossible to adhere to, try simply moving the needle in the right direction. Start with a few small changes, adding a few more vegetables and fruits to your regular daily intake, or staying hydrated, or even just switching to a whole grain bread.

It is also a good time to start paying attention to how different foods make you feel, not just in the moment, but the next day as well. Start your own food and mood journal to help you keep track of what you eat and how you feel afterwards — having something to refer back to can better help you understand what is working.

Download our Food and Mood Tracker to help **you figure out what** works for you. It can be used in conjunction with our Daily Symptom Tracker to track your symptoms.

<https://arthritis.ca/getmedia/e26aa520-cefa-4890-a747-5d7918492aca/EN-food-and-mood-tracker.pdf>

A screenshot of a digital form titled "FOOD AND MOOD TRACKER". The form includes fields for "DATE:" and "DATE:". Below these are sections for "Hours of sleep:" with a sub-question "How many hours of sleep? What is interrupted? Why?", and "Food and water:" with instructions "List the food and beverages that you consumed and drink a line through each glass of water you drank throughout the day." There are also columns for "Breakfast:", "Lunch:", "Dinner:", "Snacks:", "Water:" (with a row of 8 dots), and "Other beverages:".

### Adding or Eliminating Foods

In the current climate of wellness and nutrition, there seems to be an endless stream of advice about what foods you should stay away from if you have arthritis. For example, plants in the nightshade family (tomatoes, peppers, eggplant) have often been considered foods to avoid, but current scientific research doesn't support this approach.

**That doesn't mean some individuals won't react badly to a certain food.** The only way to really tell if you're sensitive to a particular food is to try eliminating it from your diet. However, before you decide to eliminate anything from your diet, talk to your healthcare professional about your plans, and don't forget to keep track of how you feel. Afterwards, try adding the foods that were giving you trouble back into your diet and note any changes in your Food and Mood tracker.

The same approach applies if you want to try adding a type of food. For example, some people find that adding fermented foods like miso, sauerkraut and kombucha helps to reduce their symptoms. Again, the only way to know if that will work for you is to try it and **remember to keep track of the things you've tried.**

Source: Arthritis Society: Food to the Rescue: Using Food to Manage Inflammation, 2016

## FOOD AND MOOD



Can what we eat really affect how we feel emotionally and mentally? According to research, it can. What we eat can directly affect the structure and function of our brain and, ultimately, our mood.

Source: [Harvard Health Publications, Harvard Medical School, "Nutritional psychiatry: Your brain on food"](#).

Our brain is always on, regulating both our thoughts and emotions, as well as our movements and bodily functions. It needs a constant source of fuel, and that fuel comes from **the food we eat**. **What's in the fuel** is what makes all the difference.

**Diets high in refined sugars and carbohydrates can be harmful to the brain.** Multiple studies have found a relationship between a **diet high in refined sugars and reduced brain function**, as well as a worsening of symptoms associated with mood disorders, including depression.

Source: [Harvard Health Publications, Harvard Medical School, "Nutritional psychiatry: Your brain on food"](#).  
<http://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/nutritional-psychiatry-your-brain-on-food-201511168626>



**Eating fewer foods that are high in sugar and refined carbohydrates, and increasing the amount of whole grains, nuts, beans, legumes, fruits and vegetables in your daily diet, will make it easier for your brain to do its job.** They contain vitamins and nutrients that have been associated with controlling moods, and your blood sugar will be more stable, which means fewer mood and energy swings.

Source: [Mental Health Foundation, "Diet and mental health"](#). <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/d/diet-and-mental-health>

Coping with a chronic disease such as arthritis can be frustrating and can sometimes lead to feeling down or depressed. When you're depressed, junk food can feel comforting, while preparing healthy food can seem like an overwhelming task. Make use of the healthier convenience foods that have become available, for example, if you don't have the energy to make a salad, buy a salad in a bag. Remember to always check the ingredients when you purchase anything prepared, and watch for hidden sugars.

## Nutrients to fight depression

Research is continuously teaching us about the complex ways that the body, and specifically the brain, reacts to various elements of food. Here are some recent findings that are relevant to dealing with depression:

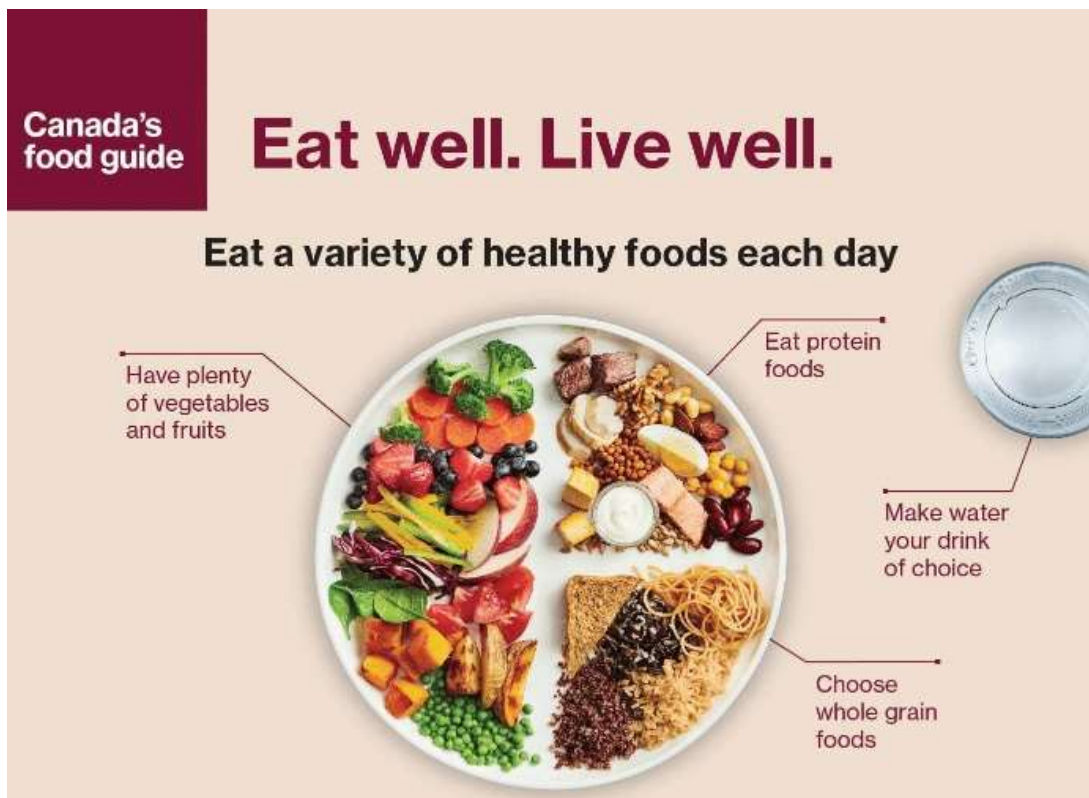
- B vitamins: Depression has been linked to a shortage of vitamins in the B family, including B6, B12 and folic acid. Ask your doctor if you should supplement your B vitamins, while eating plenty of leafy greens can help boost folic acid.
- Vitamin D: Anxiety and fatigue can be related to a vitamin D deficiency. There are only a few foods that are rich in vitamin D — oily fish, and fortified milk and orange juice. You can get vitamin D through small doses of sunlight without sunscreen (10 minutes without sunscreen a few times per week), and talk to your doctor about whether a supplement is right for you.
- Minerals: Calcium, iron, magnesium, selenium and zinc can also help prevent or lessen symptoms of depression
- Omega-3 fatty acids: **These fatty acids may also help fight depression.** Omega-3 fatty acids are found in fish such as tuna, salmon and sardines, as well as fish oil supplements.

Source: University of Michigan Depression Center Depression Toolkit.  
[http://www.depressiontoolkit.org/takecare/food\\_plan.asp](http://www.depressiontoolkit.org/takecare/food_plan.asp)

## SO WHAT SHOULD I EAT? GENERAL GUIDELINES

The first step towards good health is to follow the advice found in [Canada's Food Guide](https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/). It's a comprehensive tool designed to help people get the most from their daily food intake. <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>

[Health Canada](https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating) also has a lot of other helpful resources, including recipes, shopping tips and meal planning ideas. <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating>



## SO WHAT SHOULD I EAT? SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

### REDUCE YOUR UNHEALTHY FAT INTAKE

- Eat fish and skinless poultry more often than red meats, and prepare some meatless meals.
- Bake, steam, microwave, broil or grill more often than frying.
- Choose lean cuts of meat and trim off visible fat before cooking.
- Fill up on vegetables, fruits and whole grain bread and cereals. Limit butter, hard margarine, lard and shortening. Use canola, olive or soybean oil instead.
- Check the label of packaged foods and look at the amount of fat and sugars before making your choice. Pick pretzels more often than chips, for example.



### INCREASE YOUR GOOD FATS

Polyunsaturated fats (omega-3 and omega-6 fats from fish like mackerel and salmon, and nuts and seeds like walnut and flax) and monounsaturated fats (canola and olive oil, almonds and cashews) are the healthiest choices. Sprinkle flax on your oatmeal, whisk up your own salad dressing with olive oil, eat fish twice a week and choose omega-3 enriched products like eggs and milk.

### BOOST YOUR FRUITS AND VEGGIES

You may have grown up eating vegetables as only a small side dish, but experts now say that at least half your plate should be vegetables, and you should have fruit at every meal or snack.

Reference: *The Eat Well Plate*, Government of Canada <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/make-healthy-meals-with-the-eat-well-plate/>



**Vegetables and fruit are a great source of energy as well as fibre**, which will help you to manage your weight. Orange vegetables (carrots, sweet potatoes) and dark green vegetables (broccoli, spinach, kale) are packed with the most nutrients. Try to eat some every day. Brightly coloured fruits and veggies like berries and tomatoes tend to be high in nutrients too.



### Examples of a serving of vegetables:

- ½ cup frozen or cooked vegetables
- 1 large carrot or celery stalk
- 1 cup raw vegetables such as carrot, broccoli, **mushrooms, cauliflower**
- 1 cup raw lettuce, spinach or other greens
- ½ cup cooked greens
- ½ cup (125ml) vegetable juice

### Examples of a serving of fruit:

- 1 medium fresh fruit
- ½ cup frozen or canned fruit juices
- ¼ cup dried fruit
- 1 cup sliced fruit such as melon
- ½ cup (125 ml) fruit juice

Reference: [Canada Food Guide](#)

## PICK YOUR PROTEIN

Lean protein helps your body repair damage and helps to keep your immune system functioning properly. Choose chicken, seafood, beans, tofu, legumes, nuts and seeds more often.

### Examples of a serving of meat or meat alternative:

- **75g (2.5 ounces), 125 mL (1/2 cup) cooked fish, shellfish**, poultry or lean meat
- 157 mL (3/4 cup) cooked beans
- 2 eggs
- 30 mL (2 tbsp) peanut butter

Reference: [Canada Food Guide](#)

## DASH & MEDITERRANEAN DIETS

The DASH diet was originally designed to combat hypertension, but it turns out it's a good healthy eating diet for most of us. The DASH diet is high in fresh, lean unprocessed foods like vegetables, fruits, low-fat or no-fat dairy products, whole grains, lean meats, fish, poultry, beans and nuts. **It limits red meat, sodium and sugars.** The overall result is that **you avoid foods that promote inflammation and eat more foods that are known to suppress inflammation.** It's also a good choice for people with rheumatoid arthritis who are at higher risk for stroke, heart attack and congestive heart failure, because it works to lower blood pressure and cholesterol.

The Mediterranean diet, which as its name indicates is mostly seen in Mediterranean countries, focusses on plant-based foods like whole grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Instead of using butter, this diet promotes using healthy fats such as canola oil and olive oil, using herbs and spices instead of **salt for flavouring, eating fish and poultry at least twice a week, and eating red meat just a few times a month.**

Research shows that this approach is **associated with reduced swelling and pain in inflamed joints, not to mention a reduced risk of heart disease and some cancers.** Like the DASH diet, this approach avoids **foods that promote inflammation and is heavy on foods that reduce inflammation (antioxidants in vegetables and monounsaturated fats in nuts, for example, both fight inflammation.)**

## VEGETARIAN & VEGAN DIETS

Vegetarian diets have been shown to be helpful in the long term for some people with rheumatoid arthritis. **The theory is that it's not simply getting rid of meat — but the reduction of certain types of saturated fat, and an increase of vegetables, fruits and whole grains that can affect inflammation.** A registered dietitian can also help you with this transition.

**Canada's Food Guide** can help you plan meals and ensure you achieve your daily recommended intake of protein and nutrients. <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/>

## WATCH YOUR SUGAR

**The kind of foods you eat play a big role in your energy levels. No doubt you've noticed that a snack high in sugar gives you a quick spike in energy. But you may also have noticed that later on your energy crashes and you feel sluggish.**

**This is because of the way your body processes food. Sugary food and refined carbohydrates (like white bread) are quickly converted into glucose, which raises your blood sugar levels fast and accounts for that energy boost. The problem is that your pancreas senses this big spike in blood glucose levels and starts cranking out insulin as quickly as it can, trying to catch up. It tends to go overboard which results in a blood sugar crash that can make you feel tired.**

There is little nutritional difference between white table sugar, brown sugar, honey, syrup, cane sugar, **and raw sugar, so don't be fooled by "healthy options". Glucose and fructose are the two most common** sugars in our diet today. Our bodies handle these two types of sugar differently: Every cell in the body can break down glucose for energy, but the only cells that can handle fructose are liver cells.

Fructose is fruit sugar. It was once a minor part of our diet, but because it is very sweet and very cheap, **it's used in most packaged products** like breakfast cereals, pastries, pop and fruit drinks. Your liver uses fructose to create fat, which is bad for your heart, and can lead to other complications in addition to weight gain.

Reference: Harvard Health – Abundance of fructose not good for the liver, heart, 2011 [http://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletters/Harvard\\_Heart\\_Letter/2011/September/abundance-of-fructose-not-good-for-the-liver-heart](http://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletters/Harvard_Heart_Letter/2011/September/abundance-of-fructose-not-good-for-the-liver-heart)

## NOT SO FAST

Despite popular claims, fasting to address arthritis symptoms is not recommended. While there is some **evidence that during a fast the inflammation from rheumatoid arthritis is reduced, the effects don't last** after the end of the fast. To learn more about fasting, speak to your doctor or registered dietitian.

## WHAT'S TO DRINK?



Staying hydrated is vital when you live with arthritis. Hydration is **key for flushing toxins out of your body, which can help fight inflammation, and well-hydrated cartilage** reduces the rate of friction between bones, meaning you can move more easily.

Source: Arthritis Foundation – Best Beverages for Arthritis

Dehydration causes your body to go into a kind of survival mode where it tries to retain as much water as possible to protect your organs — this leads to sleepiness and fatigue. Dehydration can also cause **headaches, confusion and other symptoms. Overall, when you're well hydrated your body functions better, your joints feel better and you have more energy.**

Source: American Academy of Family Physicians, <http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/prevention-wellness/food-nutrition/nutrients/hydration-why-its-so-important.html>

### Introduction

Here are recommendations on what and how much you should be drinking, including water, soft drinks juice, tea, coffee and alcohol.

#### 1. Water

**Don't wait until you're thirsty to have a drink of water.** It should be your go-to beverage and should always be handy in a glass or bottle. **Many people find that keeping a jug of water in the fridge, or on the counter, helps. Others find that they prefer carbonated water and invest in a soda maker for their home.** Try adding lemon or other fruit if that makes water more appealing.

As far as how much water you need to drink in a day, eight glasses is a common measure. **Although that's a great guide, everyone is different. A quick way to know if you are drinking enough water is to check your urine.** If it is consistently colourless or light yellow, you are probably drinking enough water. **If it's dark you're probably dehydrated.**

Source: American Academy of Family Physicians: <https://familydoctor.org/hydration-why-its-so-important/>

## 2. Soft Drinks

If you drink soda pop on a regular basis, cutting back could make a big difference to your overall health. Sugary drinks wreak havoc on blood sugar levels by offering a short-term energy boost and crash. High in purines (a natural substance found in some food), soda pop creates uric acid when digested, which in turn can create a buildup of uric acid crystals in the joints and can cause health issues. If you have gout, high purine levels can cause an attack. Because of their high level of purines, sugary drinks should generally be avoided.



## 3. Juice

While juice contains more nutrients than soda and can be an easy way to boost your fruit consumption, it is also high in natural sugars, so drink it in moderation. Juice also has much of **the fibre from the fruit removed, so keep your consumption to the suggested serving.**



## 4. Tea

Green, black and white teas are rich in polyphenols, which may have strong anti-**inflammatory** effects. Preliminary research has shown they also help preserve cartilage and bone, although there are no widespread controlled trials in people with arthritis. If you drink tea, do so between meals, rather than with meals, as it can interfere with iron absorption.



Source: Arthritis Foundation – Best Beverages for Arthritis: <https://www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/arthritis-diet/best-foods-for-arthritis/best-beverages-for-arthritis.php>

## 5. Caffeine

Caffeinated drinks such as coffee, black tea and cola can affect your mental health. Caffeine is a stimulant, which means it temporarily gives you energy, but it can also make you feel nervous, irritable or restless. **If you're having difficulty sleeping,** avoid caffeinated drinks later in the day.

Source: Canadian Mental Health Association, British Columbia Division, **"Improving Mental Health**



## 6. Alcohol

**It's important to pay attention to your alcohol consumption** and how it affects your physical and mental health. Here are some things to watch out for.



**Mood:** Alcohol is a depressant that slows down the parts of your brain that affect your thinking and behaviour. If you are dealing with fatigue, depression or anxiety, watch your alcohol intake — relying on it to help cope with your **struggles can backfire and actually worsen your overall mood.**

**Weight:** If you are trying to watch your weight, remember that alcohol is high in calories and **doesn't add any nutritional benefits.**

**Gout:** Gout attacks can be brought on by purine-rich foods or drinks. Beer is high in purines. Alcohol of any kind limits the clearing of uric acid from the kidneys, which can increase symptoms.

**Medications:** Many of the medicines that are prescribed for treating your aches and pains don't mix well with alcohol. If you take a nonsteroidal anti-**inflammatory drug (NSAIDs) such as** ibuprofen or naproxen, alcohol can increase the risk of stomach bleeding and ulcers. If you take **acetaminophen, methotrexate or leflunomide, alcohol can make you more susceptible to liver damage.**

Source: Arthritis Foundation – Alcohol and Arthritis: <https://www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/arthritis-diet/foods-to-avoid-limit/alcohol-in-moderation.php>

### How much is too much?

The National Alcohol Strategy Advisory Committee says healthy adults can reduce the long-term health risks caused by alcohol by ensuring that alcohol consumption stays below 10 drinks a week, **with no more than 2 drinks a day. A drink is defined as 341 mL /12 oz of beer, cider or cooler, 142 mL (5 oz) of wine, 43 mL (1.5 oz) distilled alcohol.**

Source: Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines – Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction

## SUMMARY

Make water your go-to and drink other beverages in moderation.

## WHAT ABOUT SUPPLEMENTS?



“My aunt takes these pills and her arthritis is much better.”

“Did you see those new natural supplements at the health food store?”

“You should try this stuff to help your knees.”

Does this sound familiar? When you have arthritis, everyone — from your family members to the checkout clerk — has an opinion on herbal remedies, vitamins and other natural products you can take that will help with stiffness or pain.

Should you take a supplement to help your arthritis? The answer is: it depends.

**Herbal supplements can contain many compounds, and researchers don't yet fully understand the active and inactive ingredients and the way they work together, so while the products may be natural, they are not automatically safe.**

Source: Arthritis Society – Using Supplements to Treat Arthritis, 2018: <https://www.arthritis.ca/living-well/optimized-self/eating-well/using-supplements-to-treat-arthritis>

**Talk with your healthcare professional before taking a new supplement to make sure it doesn't interact with your other medications, and remember to try one at a time, and take notes. Write down when you start, and note any changes to your symptoms. Then (unless otherwise directed by your healthcare professional), note any changes when you stop taking it.**

Source: Arthritis Society: Food to the Rescue: Using Food to Manage Inflammation, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rc90XP1xIhU>

Here are some common supplements used to treat arthritis symptoms. This information is not intended to be taken as professional medical advice. Be sure to check with your healthcare professional before trying any new supplement or treatment.

GLUCOSAMINE/CHONDROITIN	Ok to try? Maybe
<p>Glucosamine and chondroitin are components that help make up cartilage, the tissue that cushions <b>your joints. They're produced naturally in your body, but are also available in supplements.</b></p> <p>Generally speaking, chondroitin has not been found to be helpful for pain related to knee or hip <b>osteoarthritis (OA), and large studies on glucosamine and knee OA have had conflicting results—</b>some say it helps, others say it has little or no effect.</p> <p>Be aware that these supplements may interact with anticoagulant (blood-thinning) medications like warfarin or aspirin, they can also lower blood sugar levels, which is a consideration for people with <b>diabetes or hypoglycemia. Glucosamine may also cause side effects if you have shellfish or iodine allergies.</b></p>	
OMEGA-3s/FISH OIL	Ok to try? Yes
<p>Omega-3 fatty acids can help reduce pain, swelling and the duration of morning stiffness in people with rheumatoid arthritis (RA). They also can provide modest pain relief for people with OA.</p> <p>While supplements are <b>available, the best sources are from fish such as salmon, sardines, mackerel, herring and tuna. Other Omega-3 sources (less potent than fish, however) include ground flax, flaxseed oil, walnuts and, to a limited degree, green leafy vegetables.</b></p> <p>Be aware, Omega-3s <b>found in fish can make blood clot more slowly than usual, and it's important to</b> keep a proper balance between Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids, so talk about using these supplements with your healthcare professional before you try anything.</p>	
AVOCADO SOYBEAN UNSAPONIFIABLES (ASU)	Ok to try? Yes
<p>This natural vegetable extract is derived from avocados and soybeans. It may help lessen the pain and stiffness of OA in the knees and hips, reducing the need for nonsteroidal anti-<b>inflammatory drugs</b> (NSAIDs).</p> <p>Keep in mind though that if combined with glucosamine, it can affect people with <b>shellfish allergies.</b></p>	

VITAMIN D	<a href="#">Ok to try? Yes</a>
<p>Vitamin D helps your bones absorb calcium, so it's vital for bone health. Some research indicates that a vitamin D deficiency is common in people with rheumatoid arthritis. Vitamin D deficiency may also be related to oral corticosteroids like prednisone (a common arthritis treatment). If you have fibromyalgia and are deficient in vitamin D, supplementation may help reduce symptoms.</p> <p>Some studies have linked low levels of vitamin D with increased risk of both osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. Additional research shows that osteoarthritis gets worse three times faster in people with low vitamin D, compared with <b>those who have sufficient vitamin D.</b></p>	
TURMERIC	<a href="#">Ok to try? Yes</a>
<p><b>Turmeric is a bright yellow spice that's often found in curry powder. Its primary ingredients are called curcuminoids.</b> Early research suggests that curcuminoids may help control knee pain from osteoarthritis just as well as ibuprofen does. Be aware that high doses or long-term use of turmeric can cause gastrointestinal problems or reduce iron levels.</p>	
METHYLSULFONYLMETHANE (MSM)	<a href="#">Ok to try? Maybe</a>
<p>MSM is an organic sulphur compound that helps form connective tissue. It is found naturally in fruits, <b>vegetables, animals and grains.</b> Studies have not found evidence that MSM significantly reduces arthritis pain and side effects can include upset stomach and skin rashes.</p>	
S-ADENOSYL-L-METHIONINE (SAME)	<a href="#">Ok to try? Maybe</a>
<p><b>SAMe is a molecule that's naturally produced in the body. It is also sold as a supplement since in some studies, SAMe was effective in soothing symptoms of osteoarthritis of the knee or hip.</b> Keep in mind that <b>SAMe may interact with your other medication including some antidepressants and Parkinson's medication.</b> Always ask your healthcare provider before adding a supplement to your regimen.</p>	

Sources: Arthritis Society – Using Supplements to Treat Arthritis, 2018 Linda Antinoro – Can diet improve arthritis symptoms? Harvard Health, 2013; Otesa Middleton Miles – Arthritis Foundation – [Oral Corticosteroids Can Lead to Vitamin D Deficiency](#)



## STAY IN TOUCH



Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete our survey. Your feedback will guide the ongoing improvement of our programs to help you and other Canadians better manage your arthritis.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/courseseval>

Sign up to the **flourish** e-newsletter to receive health and wellness advice, self-management tips, inspirational stories and much more to help you move through life with arthritis.

<https://arthritis.ca/living-well>

