



The University of Texas at Austin
UT Health Austin

Anti-Inflammatory Diet

Although there is no specific arthritis diet, following a balanced diet rich in antioxidants, fiber, phytochemicals, and Omega 3 fats can help support the immune system and lower inflammation.

Include foods to help lower inflammation

- Fruits and vegetables (especially berries, citrus fruit, leafy greens, and cruciferous vegetables)
 - Aim to fill half your plate with colorful fruits and vegetables!
- Whole grains (quinoa, bulgur, barley, brown rice, whole wheat products, oats)
- Legumes (garbanzo beans, black beans, kidney beans, lentils)
- Nuts and seeds (almonds, pistachios, walnuts, flax seed, chia seed)
- Fatty fish (salmon, sardines, tuna, mackerel) – aim for 2-3 servings per week
- Unsaturated fats (olive oil, canola oil, avocado)
- Spices and herbs (turmeric, ginger, garlic)
- Low fat dairy (plain Greek yogurt, Kefir, low-fat milk)

Limit foods that contribute to inflammation

- Processed meat (bacon, sausage, deli meat, chicken nuggets)
- Fried food (fries, fried chicken)
- High sugar food (soda, sweet tea, juice, dessert)
- Refined carbohydrates (white bread/pasta)
- Saturated fat (butter, shortening, red meat, full fat dairy)

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MEAL/SNACK	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4
Breakfast	Oatmeal with apple, walnuts, chia seed, and cinnamon	Whole wheat toast, avocado, egg, and an orange	Greek yogurt parfait with berries, low sugar granola, flax seed, and chia seed	Smoothie with berries, banana, low-fat milk, and hemp seed
Snack	Low fat plain Greek yogurt with berries	Hummus and carrots/celery	Apple with peanut butter	Guacamole and cucumber slices
Lunch	Burrito bowl: black beans, corn, tomatoes, avocado, lettuce, bell pepper, onion	Tuna sandwich on whole wheat bread and a tomato cucumber salad	Black bean burger with avocado and a side of broccoli	Turkey burger on whole wheat bun with a side salad
Snack	Handful of nuts	Strawberries and handful of nuts	Whole wheat pita with tzatziki sauce	Orange and almonds
Dinner	Salmon, quinoa, sautéed kale and spinach with olive oil	Ginger tofu stir fry with brown rice, snap peas, broccoli, carrots, and bell peppers	Salad bowl: chicken breast, kale, spring mix, tomatoes, sweet potato, pumpkin seeds, feta cheese, and vinaigrette dressing	Bean and lentil vegetable soup

Additional lifestyle factors that decrease inflammation in the body include:

- Daily exercise, but avoiding anything that worsens pain. Swimming can be a great exercise option when experiencing joint pain. Goal is to gradually build to 150 minutes per week with increasing intensity as tolerated
- Managing stress
- Not smoking and limiting alcohol (less than 2 drinks a day for men, less than 1 drink a day for women)
- Sleeping 7-9 hours a night

Additional resources

Cookbooks:

- Calimeris, Dorothy, and Lulu Cook. The Complete Anti-Inflammatory Diet for Beginners: A No-Stress Meal Plan with Easy Recipes to Heal the Immune System. Rockridge Press, 2017.
- Ball, Serena, and Deanna Segrave-Daly. The 30-Minute Mediterranean Diet Cookbook: 101 Easy, Flavorful Recipes for Lifelong Health. Rockridge Press, 2018.

Online recipes:

- The Mediterranean Dish <https://www.themediterraneandish.com/recipes/>
- Cooking Light <https://www.cookinglight.com/food/anti-inflammatory-recipes>
- Abra's Kitchen <https://abraskitchen.com/healthy-and-delicious-anti-inflammatory-recipes/>