

Arthritis

General good eating can help manage aches and pains! One major step to taking it easy on your joints is to maintain a healthy body weight. Maintaining a healthy weight can minimize stress on our bodies, specifically our joints. Choosing the right foods is a piece of the puzzle to help lose weight and decrease pain. But foods should you include? What foods should you limit? Below is a list of foods that can help you achieve a healthy weight and ease up on your joints. Remember, portion control is always important!

Eat More:

Whole, unprocessed grains: Include at least 3 servings of whole grains each day. Include whole grain cereals, breads, rice and pasta. Try various grains such as quinoa, barley, bulgur or whole wheat cous cous for variety! Read the ingredient list to be sure “whole” is listed as the first ingredient instead of enriched or bleached flour.

Fruits and Vegetables: Scientists have discovered more than 10,000 phytochemicals in our plant foods! Phytochemicals (phyto meaning plant) are compounds found in plants that help to fight against chronic diseases. Including more fruits and vegetables can help improve our health and reduce risk of chronic diseases, help aid with weight loss and enhance energy levels! Specific Including 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables daily for overall wellness!

Fish: Research shows that increasing your intake of fatty fish like salmon, tuna or mackerel, to 2 to 3 times per week can help reduce inflammation. Fatty fish contains omega-3 fats, which are essential fats needed for brain function and development. However, more and more research shows the benefits of omega-3 in the treatment of heart health, depression and arthritis management. Add beans to salads, pasta and rice dishes and casseroles.

Low-fat Dairy: Include 2 to 3 servings low fat or non-fat yogurt, milk and cheese per day for protein and calcium

Beans: Beans are an excellent source of protein, fiber, B vitamins and are naturally low in fat. Substitute beans for animal protein a few times a week for weight.

Eat Less:

Saturated Fat: Limit intake of these fats by cutting back on fatty meat, skin on poultry, whole dairy foods, fried foods, butter and bacon. Choose healthy monounsaturated fats like olive oil, nuts, natural peanut butter and avocados.

Trans Fat: Avoid partially hydrogenated fats in the ingredient list which include shortening, stick margarine and some snack foods.

Sugar: too much sugar can be a miserable mood maker. Eat less candy, sugary beverages, ice cream and sugary cereals.

Caffeine: Too much caffeine can disturb your sleeping habits, which in return can disturb your eating habits. Limit caffeine to no more than 200 to 300mg per day, which is equivalent to 16-24 oz coffee.

Alcohol: Limit intake to 1 per day for women and 2 per day for men. One serving is equivalent to 5 oz wine, 12 oz beer or 1 oz distilled liquor. Too much alcohol adds up, does nothing for hydration and can promote weight gain when drunk in excess.

Important Note: Increase exercise. The less you do, the worse the aches and pains are. Everything that gets worse with age gets better with exercise!