



Joint Health & Nutrition

Our joints undergo a lot of wear and tear throughout life, which can contribute to joint pain and discomfort, or conditions such as osteoarthritis. There are many factors that can contribute to joint health, some of which involve food, nutrition, and lifestyle.

Joint Lubrication

Joints are under constant use, and need adequate lubrication to move freely and without friction. There are a few things that when consumed regularly may help lubricate and cushion joints as they move.

- **Fluid** – Consume plenty of fluids, including water, juices, milk, and more. Drink a total of about 8 glasses of fluid a day to make sure there's plenty for your joints to utilize.
- **Omega 3 fatty acids** – The fats found in fish, nuts, and vegetable oils have many health benefits, one of which may include lubricating joints just like oil lubricates a car engine.
- **Glucosamine and Chondroitin** – These are both dietary supplements, and can often be found packaged together in one pill. Both natural components of cartilage, they can help maintain existing and build new cartilage.



Inflammation

Joint pain may be related to the presence of inflammation. Generally speaking, inflammation is when a part of the body becomes painful, swollen, reddened, and hot. There are some foods that are considered “anti-inflammatory,” and their consumption may help control inflammation.

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Many foods described as anti-inflammatory are also considered healthy by most standards. Regular consumption of these foods may help promote overall health, as well as joint health:

- **Fatty fish** (salmon, mackerel, herring, lake trout, sardines, and albacore tuna (fresh, not canned)) – These contain beneficial omega-3 fatty acids known as DHA and EPA. If you cannot eat these types of fish two times a week, a fish oil supplement may be an appropriate alternative. Check with your doctor before starting any supplements.
- **Fruits and vegetables** – The same ingredients that give the fruits and vegetables their color also serve anti-inflammatory functions in the body. Consume a variety of fruits and vegetables, as each colorful ingredient serves a different purpose in the body. Even using fruit and vegetable based products (e.g., tomato sauce) can serve a similar function.
- **Herbs and spices** – Many herbs and spices have similar antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects as fruits and vegetables, and can be a great way to flavor food, especially in an effort to lower salt consumption.
- **Whole grains** – Choosing whole grains over white, refined, and processed grains provides more vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

Weight Maintenance

Maintaining a healthy weight can help manage joint pain and/or osteoarthritis. Our joints must support the weight of our body, therefore the higher our weight, the heavier the load for our joints to carry. Check with your doctor before starting a weight loss plan, and aim to lose no more than 1-2 pounds per week.

Additional Notes: