



## **Diet and Your Arthritis**

excerpted from the Arthritis Foundation brochure "[Diet and Your Arthritis](#)"

### **A Look at the Research**

Can the foods you eat cause or affect your arthritis? That's one of the most common questions people with arthritis ask. Because symptoms of arthritis can vary from day to day, it is natural to think that what you ate yesterday caused or reduced the pain you feel today.

Researchers have looked at the roles diet may play in arthritis. There are some scientific reasons to think that the foods you eat could affect certain kinds of arthritis. Evidence shows that excessive weight and the type of diet you follow may influence symptoms of certain types of arthritis and related conditions.

However, all persons with arthritis, young and old, can benefit from eating a healthy, well-balanced diet. This includes a variety of foods; plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole-grain products; and sugar, salt and fat (especially saturated fat found in animal products) in moderation. Taking the recommended daily amounts of vitamins and minerals also is an important part of a healthful diet. A good diet promotes overall health and helps to control weight.

### **What We Already Know**

Research has shown several connections between food, nutritional supplements (vitamins, minerals and omega-3 fatty acids) and certain forms of arthritis or related conditions, such as gout, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, or RA, and reactive arthritis.

### **Guide to a Healthy Diet**

Because there are more than 100 types of arthritis and related diseases, no single diet will help everyone. However, doctors strongly recommend that people with arthritis or related conditions follow a diet based on variety, balance and moderation. A balanced diet can help you feel better and stay healthy; prevent chronic diseases, such as cancer and cardiovascular disease; and be a positive step toward managing your arthritis.

Good nutrition can be a challenge. People with certain kinds of arthritis may have difficulty preparing foods because of joint pain, swelling, limited mobility and fatigue. Some arthritis medications may lessen appetite and cause stomach upset. Pain and the depression that can accompany chronic illness also can affect a person's appetite or eating habits.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONCERNING NUTRITION AND ARTHRITIS, CALL THE OKLAHOMA ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION AT 405-936-3366 FOR A FREE BROCHURE: "DIET & YOUR ARTHRITIS". Or visit the Arthritis Foundation website at [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org).**