

# Arthritis

No drug or food can cure arthritis but making healthy choices may help to ease symptoms.

## Enjoy eating well

- Eat a wide variety of foods from all five food groups every day including
  - wholegrain (cereal) foods
  - vegetables
  - fruit
  - dairy products
  - lean meat and meat alternatives.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Arthritis may increase your risk of osteoporosis. Enjoy a variety of foods high in calcium, including dairy foods such as milk, yoghurt and cheese.
- You do not need to avoid any foods (except if you have gout). For more information on this see the 'Gout' and 'Eating well' factsheet.

## Eat foods high in healthy fats

Eating foods rich in healthy fats can help people with rheumatoid arthritis. These include monounsaturated fats and omega-3 fats. Foods rich in these fats are listed below:

Monounsaturated fats	Omega-3 fats
Olive oil, canola oil, peanut oil	Oily fish (such as sardines and salmon) – aim for two serves a week
Avocados	Linseeds (also called flaxseeds), linseed oil and walnuts
Nuts (such as almonds, cashews and peanuts)	Eggs and meats (such as lean beef and chicken)

## Limit foods high in unhealthy fats

- Limit foods high in saturated fat (such as processed meat, biscuits, cakes, pastries).
- Saturated fat can raise cholesterol which is linked to increased cartilage damage in people with osteoarthritis.

## Enjoy regular, gentle activity

Apart from medication, being active can bring the greatest relief for arthritis sufferers. Activity helps to avoid stiffness and strengthen muscles. Ask your GP, exercise physiologist or physiotherapist for suitable activity ideas.

Some activities to try include:

- walking
- swimming
- yoga
- pilates
- tai chi
- stationary cycling
- dancing.