

# **Study lists foods for fighting rheumatoid arthritis symptoms and progression**

November 8 2017

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## Managing rheumatoid arthritis with anti-inflammatory foods

<p><b>Fruits</b></p> <table> <tr> <th>Specific foods</th><th>Possible effects</th></tr> <tr> <td>Dried plums Grapefruit Grapes Blueberries Pomegranate Mango Bananas Peaches Apples</td><td>Reduce inflammatory cytokine levels, oxidative stress, and protect against bone and joint destruction</td></tr> </table>	Specific foods	Possible effects	Dried plums Grapefruit Grapes Blueberries Pomegranate Mango Bananas Peaches Apples	Reduce inflammatory cytokine levels, oxidative stress, and protect against bone and joint destruction	<p><b>Whole grains &amp; cereals</b></p> <table> <tr> <th>Specific foods</th><th>Possible effect</th></tr> <tr> <td>Wheat Rice Oats Corn Rye Barley Millets Sorghum Canary seed</td><td>Reduce inflammation</td></tr> </table>	Specific foods	Possible effect	Wheat Rice Oats Corn Rye Barley Millets Sorghum Canary seed	Reduce inflammation
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Khanna, S., Jaiswal, K.S., and Gupta, B. (2017) Managing Rheumatoid Arthritis with Dietary Interventions Front. Nutr. doi: 10.3389/fnut.2017.00052

List of foods and their possible effects on rheumatoid arthritis symptoms and progression Credit: Khanna, S., Jaiswal, K.S., and Gupta, B. Front. Nutr. | doi: 10.3389/fnut.2017.00052

A list of food items with proven beneficial effects on the progression and symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis is provided in a new study published today in *Frontiers in Nutrition*. The authors suggest incorporating these foods into the diet to support the management of this debilitating autoimmune disease.

"Regular consumption of specific dietary fibers, vegetables, fruits and spices, as well as the elimination of components that cause inflammation and damage, can help patients to manage the effects of [rheumatoid arthritis](#)," says Dr. Bhawna Gupta, who completed this study together with Ms. Shweta Khanna and Mr. Kumar Sagar Jaiswal at the Disease Biology Lab, School of Biotechnology, KIIT University, India.

"Incorporating probiotics into the [diet](#) can also reduce the progression and symptoms of this disease."

She continues, "Patients suffering from rheumatoid [arthritis](#) should switch from omnivorous diets, drinking alcohol and smoking to Mediterranean, vegan, elemental or elimination diets, as advised by their doctor or dietician."

Rheumatoid arthritis causes pain, swelling and stiffness in the joints, severely impacting quality of life. It is difficult to detect the early onset of the disease and if undetected or misdiagnosed has a rapid rate of progression in the first few years. The first line of treatment includes disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs, but these can be expensive.

"Supporting disease management through food and diet does not pose any harmful side effects and is relatively cheap and easy," Dr. Gupta explains. "Doctors, physicians and dieticians can use our study to summarize current proven knowledge on the links between certain foods and rheumatoid arthritis. Knowing the nutritional and medicinal requirements of their patients they can then tailor this information for the betterment of their health."

Various dietary plans for rheumatoid arthritis, such as vegan, 7-10 days fasting and Mediterranean, have long been recommended. This study—only the second overall assessment of diet and food on this disease—provides a very thorough evaluation of current scientific knowledge and makes a point of only reporting dietary interventions and specific foods that clearly show proven long-term effects.

Foods highlighted as reducing the progression and symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis range from fruits such as dried plums, blueberries and pomegranates, to whole grains, the spices ginger and turmeric, as well as specific oils and teas. They can provide a range of beneficial effects, such as lowering inflammatory cytokines (chemicals released by the immune system that can cause problems in rheumatoid arthritis patients), reducing joint stiffness and pain, as well as lowering oxidative stress—the ability of the body to counteract or detoxify harmful chemicals.

The authors hope the study can also be used as a reference for the development of new medicines.

"Our review focused on specific dietary components and phytochemicals from foods that have a proven beneficial [effect](#) on rheumatoid arthritis," says Dr. Gupta. "Pharmaceutical companies may use this information to formulate 'nutraceuticals'. Nutraceuticals have an advantage over chemically-tailored medicines as they are not associated with any side

effects, originate from natural sources and are cheaper."

Dr. Gupta concludes by offering some advice for those hoping to use the findings of their study.

"We reviewed research from several laboratory experiments under different conditions. Dietary components vary according to geography and weather conditions, so patients should be aware of their nutritional requirements, allergies and any other food-related [disease](#) history. We strongly suggest the general public consult doctors and dieticians before following any diet program or [food](#) compounds discussed in the study."

**More information:** Shweta Khanna et al, Managing Rheumatoid Arthritis with Dietary Interventions, *Frontiers in Nutrition* (2017). [DOI: 10.3389/fnut.2017.00052](https://doi.org/10.3389/fnut.2017.00052)

Provided by Frontiers

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