

Strategies to Assist with Arthritis

Neal Barnard ¹ suggests that the foods below should be initially avoided whilst eliminating potential arthritic triggers. He recommends that meats, dairy products, or eggs *should not be reintroduced back into the diet*. The list below is in approximate order of the likelihood of causing problems.

- Dairy products
- Meats (including fish and shellfish)
- Eggs
- Wheat, oats, rye
- Corn
- Citrus fruits
- Potatoes
- Tomatoes
- Nuts
- Coffee

The foods below virtually never contribute to arthritis or other painful conditions. These include:

- Brown rice
- Cooked or dried fruits: cherries, cranberries, pears, prunes (but NOT citrus fruits, bananas, peaches or tomatoes)
- Cooked green, yellow, and orange vegetables: artichokes, asparagus, broccoli, chard, collards, lettuce, spinach, string beans, summer or winter squash, sweet potatoes, tapioca, and taro (poi)
- Water: plain water or carbonated forms, such as Perrier, are fine. Other beverages – even herbal teas – can be triggers.
- Condiments: modest amounts of salt, maple syrup, and vanilla extract are usually well-tolerated.

After four weeks, if your symptoms have improved or disappeared, the next step is to nail down which one or more of the trigger foods has been causing your problem. Reintroduce a generous amount of the foods you have eliminated back into your diet one at a time, every two days.

Barnard also suggests a tablespoon of flaxseed oil with 500 mg of blackcurrant oil twice daily.

Alternatively, evening primrose oil can be helpful.

Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM), especially if taken with glucosamine, has been shown to significantly improve symptoms of osteoarthritis.² It appears to be also effective with other forms of arthritis.

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Footnotes

1. Barnard, N. D. (1998) *Foods That Fight Pain*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
2. Usha, P. & Naidu, M. (2004) Randomised, double-blind, parallel, placebo-controlled study of oral glucosamine, methylsulfonylmethane and their combination in osteoarthritis. *Clinical drug investigation*. 24 (6), 353–363.