

EAT WELL, AGE WELL. ARTHRITIS AWARENESS

Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis, also known as degenerative joint disease, is the most common form of arthritis. It affects one-third of adults over the age of 65. Osteoarthritis involves the degeneration of cartilage in joints and bones which causes severe inflammation that can cause further damage.

Inflammation is a natural response of a healthy immune system that is most commonly associated with injury and illness. However, chronic inflammation is much harder to recognize and over time can cause damage to tissues. This chronic inflammation can be the cause of joint damage associated with osteoarthritis.

Arthritis is a complicated disease that has many varying components. Diet, genetics, and health history are all risk factors for arthritis.

In the next placemat we will be discussing how diet impacts inflammation and how to recognize foods that cause inflammation.

We will also discuss how certain foods, like blueberries and chia seeds, can help reduce inflammation.

Blueberry Banana Overnight Oats

Ingredients:

- ½ banana
- ½ cup blueberries (fresh or frozen)
- ½ cup rolled oats
- ½ Milk
- 1 tbsp. maple syrup (optional)
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp chia seeds

Photographer: Congerdesign



Directions

1. In a 2-cup jar or preferred container, with a lid, combine the rolled oats and chia seeds
2. Pour in the milk and then place the bananas and blueberries on top of the oats
3. Place lid on and store in refrigerator overnight
4. Stir the oats and add syrup if desired and a little extra milk to loosen up the oats. Enjoy Cold or you can heat it up if you like.

Modified from source: <https://www.organizeyourselfskinny.com/2016/08/17/blueberry-banana-overnight-oats-recipe/>



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Inflammatory Diets

Diet plays a key role in the inflammation process. Unfortunately, many foods found in our society contribute to chronic inflammation that can cause and impact arthritis.

What foods cause inflammation? Foods high in starches, sugar, and saturated/ trans-fats are likely to trigger the release of inflammatory compounds and reduce those that help to fight inflammation. These foods are often highly processed, like cookies and fried foods.

Reducing the consumption of sugar, processed grains, candy, red meat, and sweetened beverages can help to reduce inflammation caused by dietary intake.

Anti-inflammatory diets consist of natural antioxidants and fiber found in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Some examples are blueberries, chia seeds, walnuts, broccoli, olive oil, turmeric, and garlic. Antioxidants help to protect our body by preventing our tissues from oxidative stress.

An anti-inflammatory diet is simply a diet that focuses on consuming fresh produce and whole grains, while limiting refined processed foods and sugar.

Tuscan Farro Soup

Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion
- 2 celery stalks
- 2 carrots
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 cup farro, spelt or barley
- 1 can white cannellini beans, rinsed & drained
- 2 cups chopped or diced tomatoes
- 6 cups vegetable stock or water
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil (optional)
- Grated parmesan (optional)

Source: Pixels Photographer: Fox



Directions

1. Peel and cut carrots and celery
2. Heat oil in deep saucepan over medium heat
3. Add onion, celery, carrots, salt and pepper to the pan
4. Cook and stir often until onion is softened, 5-10 minutes
5. Add garlic and stir
6. Add farro (or grain of choice), beans, tomatoes, and stock, stir
7. Bring pan to a boil and then reduce to a simmer
8. Cook until farro (grain) and beans are tender-about an hour
9. Add more stock if mixture is too thick
10. Stir in parsley and basil
11. Continue to cook another 5 min.
12. Garnish with cheese if you like

Modified from source:

<https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1845-tuscan-farro-soup>

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Mediterranean Diet

It is likely that you have heard about the Mediterranean diet before, but can it help with arthritis symptoms?

First, the Mediterranean diet is characterized by large amounts of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes (beans), spices, fish, and nuts.

A study published in The Journal of Nutrition in 2017 followed 99 patients who consumed a Mediterranean diet for 16 weeks. The study found a reduction in biomarkers for cartilage degeneration for those that consumed the Mediterranean diet.

Another study in 2016 followed 4,000 patients who had or were at risk of osteoporosis-arthritis for eight years. The study found that those who consumed a typical American diet were twice as likely as to become frail compared to those who consumed a Mediterranean-style diet.

These and other studies have shown that anti-inflammatory diets, like the Mediterranean, can possibly slow down disease progression of arthritis.

Focusing on a diet that is full of plant-based nutrients and limiting processed food is simple way to help reduce arthritis symptoms.

Mediterranean Quinoa Bowls with Romesco Sauce



Photo courtesy of Pixabay.com

Ingredients:

Romesco Sauce:

- 2 red bell peppers, cut in half and seeds removed
- 1 large plum tomato cut in half lengthwise
- 2 cloves garlic (in skins)
- ¼ cup almond slivers (optional)
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
- Salt to taste (optional)

Quinoa Bowl:

- 1 cup quinoa (dry)
- 1 ¾ cups water or broth
- Avocado, sliced
- 1 cup tomato & cucumber, diced
- 1 cup artichoke hearts, coarsely chopped
- ½ cup Kalamata olives, sliced
- ¼ cup feta (crumbled)
- 2 tbsp. parsley, chopped

Directions

1. In a baking dish, place the peppers (skin side up), the tomatoes (skin side down) and the garlic. Roast under a broiler until the peppers have been charred, remove the tomatoes once they are roasted and the garlic when it is lightly golden brown, about 5-15 minutes.
2. Cool and remove the skins from the peppers and garlic.
3. Puree all romesco sauce ingredients in a blender or food processor, to desired consistency.
4. Bring quinoa and water to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer, covered, until the liquid has been absorbed and the quinoa is tender, about 15-20 minutes.
5. Assemble the quinoa bowl by placing the vegetables, feta, and parsley into the bowl
6. Top with romesco sauce

Adapted from source:

<http://www.closetcooking.com/2017/01/mediterranean-quinoa-bowls-with-romesco.html>

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Spice Up Your Diet

When people think of antioxidants they often think only of foods like blueberries and cranberries. However, even small amounts of spices are an incredible source of inflammation fighting antioxidants.

Studies have found that ½ teaspoon of ground cloves is said to have more antioxidants than ½ cup of blueberries? Also, one teaspoon of dried oregano is equal to a whole cup of sweet potatoes!

Spices are natural antioxidants that help to reduce inflammation in our bodies. Studies have shown that cinnamon had more antioxidant effects than plants like spinach and artichoke.

Incorporating spices into your diet is an easy way to increase your antioxidant intake and add flavor to your meals. Some of my favorite spices are cloves, ginger, and cinnamon. These spices can be easily added to whole grain pancakes or muffins for extra flavor.

Oregano is commonly used on pizzas and spaghetti, but you can also sprinkle in on sandwiches or with salad dressings.

There are endless ways to spice up your diet with spices and with the incredible health benefits it's a win-win!

Greek Salad Dressing

Ingredients:

- 1 Fresh Lemon
- ¼ cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 Clove Garlic
- 2 tsp Dried Oregano
- ½ tsp Salt (optional)
- 1 tsp Black Pepper



Source: pixabay.com- Steve Buissonne (photographer)

Directions

1. Squeeze the juice of one lemon into a small mixing bowl
2. Mince garlic and place into bowl
3. Wisk olive oil, garlic, and oregano
4. Add salt and pepper to taste
5. Toss on your salad & enjoy!

Adapted from source:
<https://www.primalpalate.com/paleo-recipe/greek-salad-dressing/>