

**ANTI-INFLAMMATORY  
NUTRITION FOR:  
RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS  
PSORIATIC ARTHRITIS**

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## What are RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS and PSORIATIC ARTHRITIS?

**Rheumatoid arthritis (RA):**  
autoimmune condition  
attacking joints, other organs  
↑ heart disease risk.

**Psoriatic arthritis (PsA):**  
arthritis linked with psoriasis, affects joints, skin,  
nails, ↑ obesity/metabolic risk.



# Why consider nutrition?

**Nutrition can be done along with medications.**

- Mediterranean-style diets: modest RA symptom improvements in trials.
- Weight management in PsA: linked with better disease control and biologic response.
- **Both conditions: higher risk for heart disease and diabetes.**





# The Anti-Inflammatory Plate

- \*½ Vegetables & Fruit: leafy greens, broccoli, carrots, berries, citrus.
  - \*¼ Protein: beans, lentils, tofu, edamame, salmon/sardines. Limit red/processed meats.
  - \*¼ Whole Grains: quinoa, oats, barley, brown rice. Prefer low GI options.
- Healthy Fats Around Plate: olive oil, walnuts, chia, flax, avocado.

*\*GI=Glycemic Index*

- \*RA: Mediterranean diet reduced disease activity.**
- \*PsA: 5–10% weight loss linked with improved outcomes + biologic response.**





# Anti-Inflammatory Spices

- **Turmeric + black pepper:** studied in RA.
- **Ginger:** may reduce inflammatory pathways.
- **Garlic & onions:** antioxidants + prebiotic.
- **Cinnamon:** may help with glucose control
- **Chili/peppers:** capsaicin affects pain perception

# Foods to limit:

- **Ultra-processed foods** (soda, sweets, chips).
- **Processed meats** (bacon, hot dogs, lunch meats).
- **Excess alcohol:** worsens PsA + can interact with meds.
- **Added sugars:** ↑ weight, ↑ diabetes risk (esp. with steroids).



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# Other diets to consider

- **Plant-based / Vegetarian**
  - Some studies show RA improvement.
  - Likely due to ↑ plant foods/fiber, not strict avoidance.
- **Gluten-free**
  - Small RA trial suggested benefit.
  - No strong reason to avoid unless gluten-sensitive/celiac.
- **Fasting / Intermittent fasting**
  - Early studies suggest short-term RA improvement.
  - More research needed; best done with medical supervision.
- **Keto / Paleo**
  - Popular but poorly studied in RA/PsA.
  - May ↑ saturated fat & heart risk.
- **Mediterranean (Best studied)**
  - Multiple trials show modest RA improvement + heart benefit.
  - Remains most evidence-supported.

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# FAQs



## **Q: Can diet replace my medications?**

A: No. Diet is an adjunct. Mediterranean diets show modest improvements in RA.

## **Q: Does losing weight help PsA?**

A: Yes. Even 5–10% weight loss improves symptoms + biologic response.

## **Q: Should I avoid gluten, dairy, or nightshades?**

A: No universal need. Only if you notice personal intolerance.

## **Q: What about omega-3s?**

A: Fatty fish, flax, chia, walnuts are reasonable.

## **Q: Should I take probiotics?**

A: Evidence inconsistent. Focus on fiber-rich plant foods.



- **No single “miracle diet” for RA or PsA.**
- **Diets emphasizing whole plant foods, healthy fats, and weight management have the strongest evidence.**
- **Restrictive diets (e.g., keto, vegan, gluten-free) should be medically supervised to ensure nutrition adequacy.**

## **Lifestyle Beyond Food**

Other levers that influence inflammation:

- Exercise: aerobic + resistance can help reduce inflammation.
- Sleep: 7–8 hrs supports immune resilience.
- Stress: yoga, tai chi, mindfulness, forest walks may lower stress-related inflammation.



# Resources & References

- Arthritis Foundation – Nutrition and Arthritis
- <https://www.arthritis.org/health-wellness/healthy-living/nutrition>
- American Heart Association – Mediterranean Diet Overview
- <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/mediterranean-diet>
- Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health – Glycemic Index and Load
- <https://www.health.harvard.edu/diseases-and-conditions/glycemic-index-and-glycemic-load-for-100-foods>
- National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) – Omega-3 Supplements: In Depth
- <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/omega3-supplements-in-depth>
- Mayo Clinic – Psoriatic Arthritis and Weight Management
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/psoriatic-arthritis/in-depth/psoriatic-arthritis-diet/art-20479633>