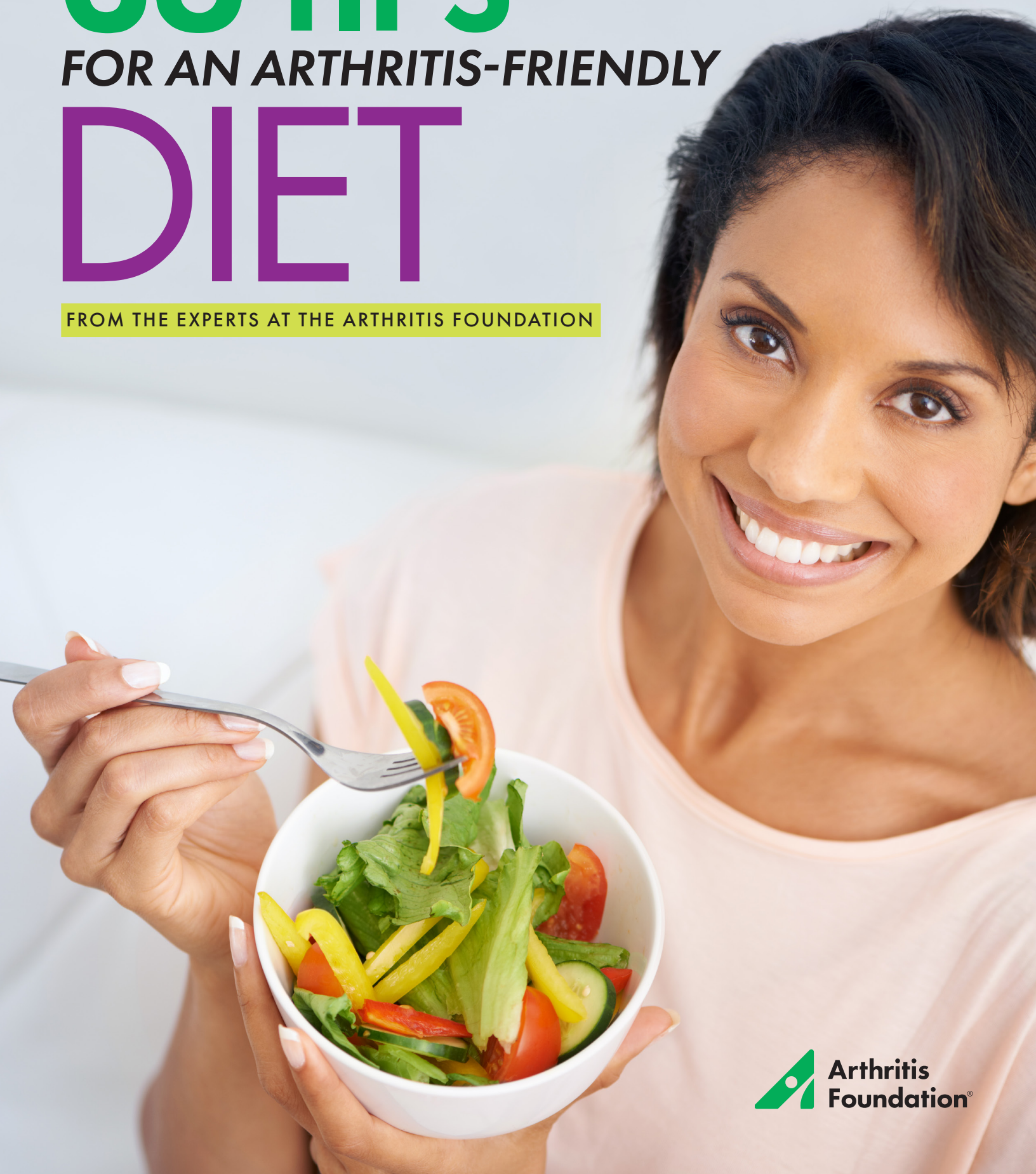


# 36 TIPS FOR AN ARTHRITIS-FRIENDLY DIET

FROM THE EXPERTS AT THE ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION





# What's in your grocery cart?

LEARN WHAT FOODS TO BUY AND WHAT TO SKIP FOR YOUR ARTHRITIS AND YOUR HEALTH.

Eating right for your arthritis and your overall health begins with what you buy. This means selecting foods that can help you maintain a weight that doesn't overload joints, emphasizing nutrient-rich foods and skipping fatty, sugary, processed products that stoke inflammation.

## CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Produce
- 3 Deli
- 4 Meat & Seafood
- 5 Pasta & Grain
- 6 Frozen
- 7 Packaged
- 8 Bread & Cereal
- 9 Snacks
- 10 Dairy



# PRODUCE

Nutrient-dense fruits and veggies deliver anti-oxidants that fight inflammation.



**1 Pass over pale lettuce.** The darker the leaf, the more nutrients it has, including antioxidant vitamins A and C, bone-strengthening vitamin K and calcium.

**2 Shop for vibrant colors.** Choose an array of colorful fruits and vegetables; they get their pigments from antioxidants, such as the blues and purples from anthocyanin and the oranges and yellows from beta-carotene.

**3 Think “snacks.”** Grab bite-sized fruits and veggies like grapes and pre-cut carrots, or those you can easily cut and store, such as apples.

**4 Stock up on avocados.** Keep a ripe one at the ready to mash for a nutritious and satisfying mayo substitute or to slice into salads. Avocados are high in healthy unsaturated fats that may aid weight loss and reduce heart disease and stroke risk.



# DELI



Be selective.  
Many deli items are  
high in unhealthy  
fats, salt and other  
diet-busting  
foods.

**5 Ask questions.** If there's no nutrition information or label, inquire about ingredients and preparation, and don't be afraid to make special requests, like a salad without cheese or a newly made sandwich with fresh veggies.

**6 Choose your cheese.** Select flavorful varieties, such as sharp cheddar, to grate or crumble on sandwiches and other foods; it adds tang with relatively low calorie cost. A little tasty, high-fat cheese a couple of times a week won't wreck your diet and will help keep you from overeating low-fat "healthier" varieties.

**7 Skip diet destroyers.** That includes fried anything, mayonnaise-laden salads and cheese-heavy pastas – high-fat foods that contribute to inflammation.

**8 Order a better sandwich.** Load it up with dark lettuce, tomato, spinach, shredded carrots, bell peppers, olives and onions. Add a low-sodium meat if you like and ask for condiments that pack flavor rather than calories, such as spicy mustard or oil and vinegar with dried Italian spices. Reduce calories from bread by ordering half instead of a whole sandwich and add a healthy salad.



# MEAT & SEAFOOD



Fatty fish, like salmon, is the most potent source of anti-inflammatory omega-3s.

**9 Opt for lean meats.** After fish, lean meats such as chicken and turkey are your best choices. If you eat red meat, buy leaner cuts, such as sirloin, flank or tenderloin. And consider getting grass-fed; recent research shows grass-fed cattle may produce beef with more omega-3 fats than conventionally raised cattle do.

**10 Add fish to your menu.** Eating three to four servings of fish per week is a good idea, especially for people with inflammatory types of arthritis.

**11 Beware prepared meats.** Read labels and ask about ingredients in pre-marinated or stuffed meats and seafood; they often have a surprising load of calories, sodium or sugar.

**12 Forgo processed meats.** Sausages, hot dogs, bacon, ham and other processed meats are high in sodium, sugar and preservatives, like nitrites. Studies link processed meats to a rise in C-reactive protein (CRP, a blood marker of inflammation) and certain cancers.

# PASTA & GRAIN



Cut refined grains and add whole grains to lower inflammatory markers and help weight loss.

**13** **Go with “ancient grains.”** This trend has created an explosion of grain and pasta products. Most ancient grains, such as farro and millet, are whole and may be higher in fiber and protein. Brown rice and whole-wheat pasta are often less expensive and just as healthy.

**14** **Expand your pasta palate.** Beyond whole wheat are pastas made of quinoa, farro and other grains. Legume-based pastas, like those made from garbanzos, deliver extra protein and fiber.

**15** **Be gluten savvy.** If you have celiac disease, gluten-free products are a must; some other people say that cutting out gluten makes them feel better, but gluten-free products are not necessarily more nutritious or lower in calories or sugar than their gluten-containing counterparts.

**16** **Find smart shortcuts.** Some “instant” or quick-cook versions of rice, oatmeal and other grains are just as healthy as slower-cook versions.



# FROZEN



**65%**

People who say  
nutrition moderately  
or greatly impacts  
their arthritis

FROM A SURVEY OF ARTHRITIS  
FOUNDATION MEMBERS

**17 Go fish.** Seafood starts to lose its nutritional value as soon as it's caught. Frozen seafood is frozen immediately after it's caught, so it's often fresher and can be more nutritious than refrigerated seafood.

**18 Favor yogurt.** Although high in sugar, some frozen yogurts have probiotic benefits. Look for a "live and active cultures" seal on the package.

**19 Pick plain.** Buy frozen fruits and veggies without added sauces, sugar or fat.

**20 Choose convenience foods carefully.** Foods like pizzas and breakfast sandwiches are low in fiber and high in fat, sodium and other additives. If you like frozen meals for their convenience, select those with high fiber (3 to 5 grams) and less than 600 mg of sodium, 5 grams of saturated fat and no trans fat.



# PACKAGED



**21 Choose low-sodium.** Items should have about 5 percent (120 milligrams) daily value of sodium per serving. Drain and rinse canned foods like beans.

**22 Look for legumes.** Garbanzos, lentils, cannellinis and other beans and peas are low-fat, nutritional powerhouses brimming with protein, fiber, iron and B vitamins, particularly folate. Plus, they're satisfying substitutes if you're cutting back on meat. (Dried legumes have the same perks.)

**23 Forget flavored fish.** Get the omega-3s and avoid additives by picking plain tuna or sardines (no mustard or spicy flavors), packed in water or their own oil.

**24 Bypass processed.** Mac and cheese, instant potatoes and many jarred gravies and sauces are calorie-laden, high-glycemic foods that spike blood sugar and can pack on pounds.



# BREAD & CEREAL



**84%**

People who believe  
a healthy diet is  
important for man-  
aging arthritis

FROM A SURVEY OF ARTHRITIS  
FOUNDATION MEMBERS

**25** **Stick with whole grains.** Refining strips away key nutrients. Whole grains can help lower CRP levels, control weight and may reduce risks of heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

**26** **Buy high fiber.** Make sure all of your grains are high-fiber and at least half are whole. High-fiber foods are filling, which may help control hunger.

**27** **Go for low sugar and sodium.** Choose products with less than 140 mg per serving of sodium and the least amount of sugar per serving.

**28** **Look for 100% whole grain.** A whole grain should be the first ingredient listed. "Multigrain," "stone ground" and "100 percent wheat" don't guarantee it's whole grain.

# SNACKS



**37%**

People who have  
tried a diet to help  
manage their  
arthritis.

FROM A SURVEY OF ARTHRITIS  
FOUNDATION MEMBERS

**29** **Avoid processed snacks.** While they're easy to grab and go, processed snacks deliver high sodium, sugar and other unhealthy additives.


**30** **Sample alternative veggie-based snacks.** Roasted garbanzos, lentil chips, crisped snow peas and other vegetable and legumes snacks are tasty replacements for potato and corn chips.

**31** **Read labels.** If the lentil chips' label lists flour instead of lentils as the first ingredient, pass. Baked snacks may have less fat than fried, but most are refined, stripped of fiber and other nutrients.

**32** **Don't forget popcorn.** This tasty whole grain is easy to fix. Air-pop plain kernels instead of using microwavable packs.



# DAIRY



Dairy may reduce the risks of developing osteoporosis, diabetes and heart disease.

**33 Drink milk.** Studies have shown that women who increased their milk intake experienced slower progression of knee osteoarthritis. Keep it – as well as yogurt and fresh cheeses, such as cottage and ricotta – skim or low-fat.

**34 Know your milk alternatives.** If you prefer plant-based milk, read the nutrition label. Unless it's fortified, it might not have the same nutritional profile as cow milk. For example, soy milk has almost as much as protein as dairy milk (about 8 grams), but almond milk delivers very little. But soy is

low in calcium, so look for an unsweetened product fortified with calcium.

**35 Skip sweetened dairy products.** Flavored yogurt, milk and milk alternatives contain sugar, which add to weight and inflammation. (Sweeten plain yogurt by stirring in fruit.)

**36 Try probiotic and fermented foods,** such as non-fat Greek yogurt, kefir and sauerkraut. Fermentation can improve the bioavailability of certain nutrients, such as zinc, iron and calcium.

# Welcome to the Live Yes! Arthritis Network.

**We realize you didn't sign up for arthritis. Our family is probably one you never planned to join. But it's a special community where you'll find strength, support and solutions to live life to the fullest.**

As part of the largest, most supportive arthritis community, we'll help make your everyday life easier. We'll cheer you on during the good days and lift your spirits on the bad ones. And we'll challenge you, too — to help redefine the future for all 54 million of us living with arthritis.

## Where to Start

While we're getting to know each other, here's where to start, depending on what you need and want.

**I WANT TO CONNECT** with people going through a similar experience.  
**Go to [liveyes.arthritis.org](http://liveyes.arthritis.org)**

**I LOVE DATA** and want to know more about the latest research.  
**Go to [arthritis.org/arthritis-cure](http://arthritis.org/arthritis-cure)**

**I NEED PRACTICAL ADVICE** and tools to improve my everyday life  
**Go to [arthritis.org/Tools](http://arthritis.org/Tools)**

## Need help now?

**Call us 24/7 at 844-571-HELP or visit [arthritis.org](http://arthritis.org).**

**IN LESS THAN  
5 MIN YOU CAN  
BE CONNECTED.**

The turning point in my arthritis journey was meeting others who understood what I was going through. Thanks to the Live Yes! Arthritis Network, I've found encouragement and advice to help me adjust to my new normal. This amazing community has empowered me to live my most meaningful life.

— Liz M.



**Live Yes!**<sup>SM</sup>  
**Arthritis Network**