



MedFit

CLASSROOM

Module 9:
Anti-Inflammatory
Nutritional Recommendations

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Anti-Inflammatory Nutritional Recommendations

**“I don't want people giving me electric
can openers, I want to be able to do it
myself...or I'll have something else
for dinner.”**

-Julie Comer, RA Patient





The Anti-Inflammatory Diet

What is the Anti-inflammatory diet?

While there is no specific “diet” that people with arthritis or rheumatoid arthritis (RA), should follow, researchers have identified certain foods that can help control inflammation. Many of them are found in the so-called Mediterranean diet, which emphasizes fish, vegetables and olive oil, among other staples.

The Mediterranean Diet

Benefits:

Studies confirm that eating foods commonly part of the Mediterranean diet can do the following:

- **Lower blood pressure**
- **Protect against chronic conditions, ranging from cancer to stroke**
- **Help arthritis by curbing inflammation**
- **Benefit your joints as well as your heart**
- **Lead to weight loss, which can lessen joint pain**



The Key Foods of the Mediterranean Diet?

Fish

How much: Health authorities like the American Heart Association and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommend three to four ounces of fish, twice a week. Arthritis experts claim more is better. (inflammation-fighting omega-3 fatty acids).

Best sources: Salmon, tuna, sardines, herring, anchovies, scallops and other cold-water fish. Hate fish? Take a supplement. Studies show that taking 600 to 1,000 mg of fish oil daily eases joint stiffness, tenderness, pain and swelling.

Nuts & Seeds

How much: Eat 1.5 ounces of nuts daily (one ounce is about a handful).

Nuts are jam-packed with inflammation-fighting monounsaturated fat.

Best sources: Walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios and almonds.



The Key Foods of the Mediterranean Diet?

Fruits & Veggies

How much: Aim for nine or more servings daily (one serving = one cup of most veggies or fruit or two cups of raw leafy greens).

Fruits and vegetables are loaded with antioxidants. These potent chemicals act as the body's natural defense system, helping to neutralize unstable molecules called free radicals that can damage cells. Research has shown that anthocyanins found in cherries and other red and purple fruits like strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and blackberries have an anti-inflammatory effect.

Best sources: Colorful fruits and veggies – the darker or more brilliant the color, the more antioxidants it has. Good ones include blueberries, cherries, spinach, kale and broccoli.

Nightshade Vegetables

Why: Nightshade vegetables, including eggplant, tomatoes, red bell peppers and potatoes, are disease-fighting powerhouses that boast maximum nutrition for minimal calories



The Key Foods of the Mediterranean Diet?

Olive Oil

How much: Two to three tablespoons daily.

Why: Olive oil is loaded with heart-healthy fats, as well as oleocanthal, which has properties similar to nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

Best sources: Extra virgin olive oil goes through less refining and processing, so it retains more nutrients than standard varieties.

Beans

How much: About one cup, twice a week (or more).

Why: Beans are loaded with fiber and phytonutrients, which help lower CRP, an indicator of inflammation found in the blood. At high levels, CRP could indicate anything from an infection to RA.

Best sources: Small red beans, red kidney beans and pinto beans rank among the U.S. Department of Agriculture's top four antioxidant-containing foods (wild blueberries take the number 2 spot).



The Key Foods of the Mediterranean Diet?


Whole Grains

How much: Eat a total of six ounces of grains per day; at least three of which should come from whole grains. One ounce of whole grain would be equal to ½ cup cooked brown rice or one slice of whole-wheat bread.

Why: Whole grains contain plenty of filling fiber – which can help you maintain a healthy weight. Some studies have also shown that fiber and fiber-rich foods can lower blood levels of CRP, an inflammatory marker.

Best sources: Eat foods made with the entire grain kernel, like whole-wheat flour, oatmeal, bulgur, brown rice and quinoa. Some people may need to be careful about which whole grains they eat. Gluten – a protein found in wheat and other grains – has been linked to inflammation for people with celiac disease (CD) or gluten sensitivity.





Foods To Avoid..... The “S.O.S.”

SALT, OIL & SUGAR!



-The American Heart Association suggests limiting added sugars to no more than 6 teaspoons, or 100 calories, for women and 9 teaspoons, or 150 calories for men.

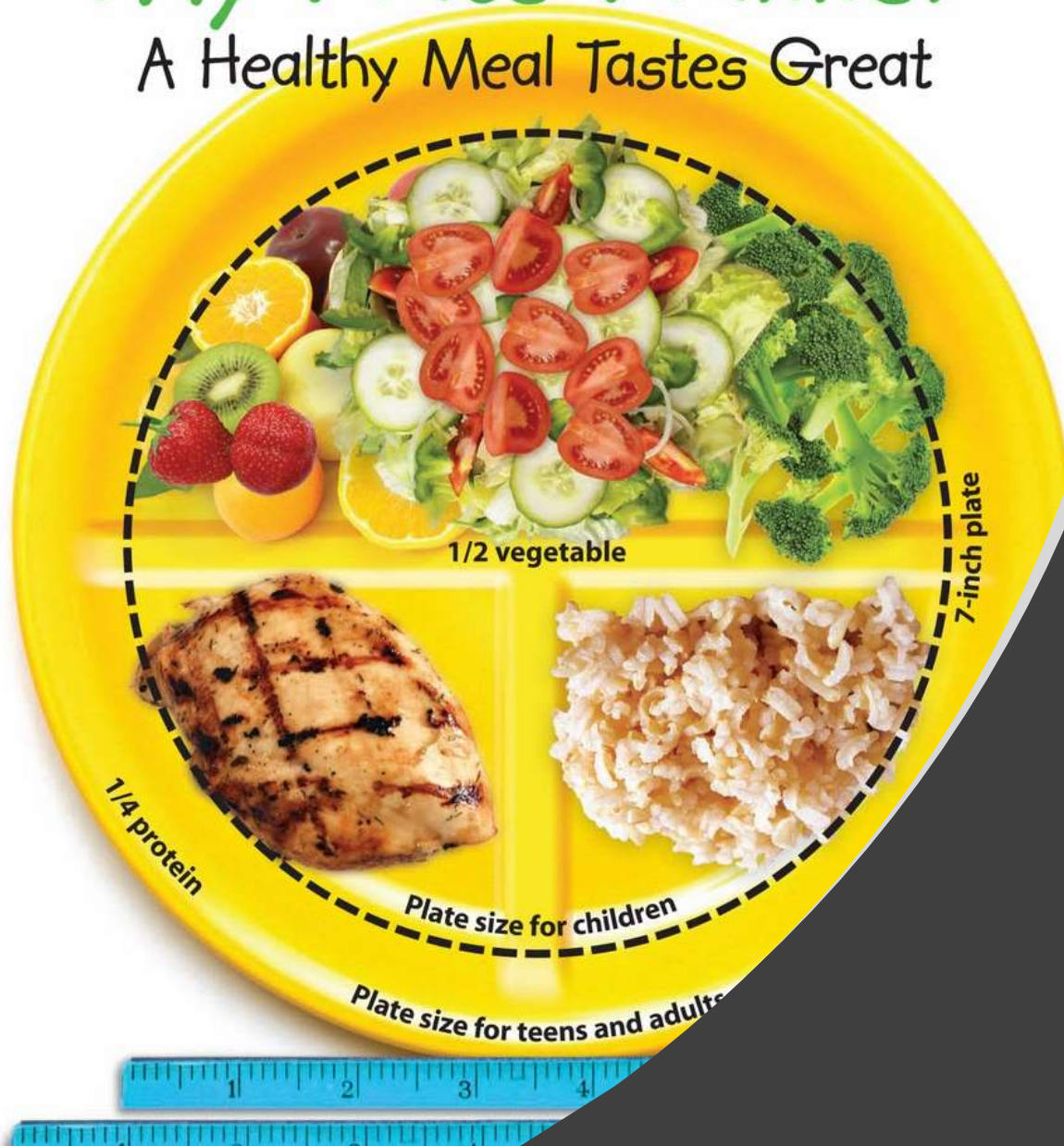
-The Mayo Clinic suggests ingesting less than 2300 mg of sodium each day, which seems like a lot, until you realize that $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt contains 1200 mg. In addition, the daily oil intake recommendations vary based on your gender, age and activity level.

-According to the (USDA), women age 19-30 years who exercise for less than 30 minutes each day should consume about 6 teaspoons of oils each day, and women above age 30 years need 5 teaspoons.

-The average American is said to eat double or triple the amount of the daily recommendations which is a leading cause of flare-ups among a plethora of other health issues.

My Plate Planner

A Healthy Meal Tastes Great



Foods To Embrace

In 2011, the USDA replaced its food pyramid with a new icon for healthy eating called MyPlate. The MyPlate icon shows an image of a place setting with a plate and glass. The plate is divided into food group targets (vegetables, protein, fruits, and grain). Shifting to a plate-based approach nutrition encourages people to look at what's on their actual food plate. If your plate looks similar to the icon with lots of fruits and vegetables, then you are probably on the right track.

The American Diabetes Association recommends that half of your plate should be vegetables, one-fourth protein, and one-fourth grains, and emphasizes water as the beverage of choice. Small servings of fruit and fats ... such as nuts, seeds, nut butters, avocados, and organic oils complete a healthy plate.

To ensure adequate fiber intake, vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and beans should make up the bulk of the carbohydrates you are consuming. If you consume dairy, choose lower fat or fat free options, and if you don't consume dairy, be sure to eat other calcium containing foods such as broccoli, kale, and almonds. Talk to a registered dietitian or doctor about calcium supplementation if you are unable to meet your calcium needs through food.

Expert Advice!

“One of the best things you can do to feel your best is to limit processed foods and foods prepared outside of your home. Making more of your own meals gives you more control over the ingredients. Eating more vegetables (be sure to include some veggies raw) and plant-based foods can help you feel better and live longer. Aim to decrease red meat (pork, beef and lamb), and replace with some bean-based meals, such as lentils with brown rice and spinach”

-Tricia Silverman, Registered Dietitian



Things to consider.

As an arthritis fitness specialist, ask yourself:

- 1. Do you understand your role and limitations when providing nutrition advice if you are not a doctor, nutritionist or registered dietitian?**
- 2. Can you identify anti-inflammatory foods?**
- 3. Can you describe the characteristics of the Mediterranean Diet?**
- 4. Can you identify inflammatory foods?**
- 5. What does S.O.S. stand for? How does it affect someone with arthritis?**
- 6. Can you describe the characteristics of “My Plate?” Why is this a successful tool?**

Be sure you have watched the video link included in this section of the manual for more ideas about anti-inflammatory foods.

At this time, please complete the Module #9 Quiz.