Food Cures. Is there such a thing?

Description

Gentle Reader,

I've joined an on line face book arthritis support group to learn from others how they suffer and what they are doing about it. Following the rabbit trails I came to this web site maintained by a Joy Bauer. She has a slide show showing foods that are helpful for sufferers of arthritis. You can also take a survey here that will give you a food suggestion list based on your answers to several life style questions.

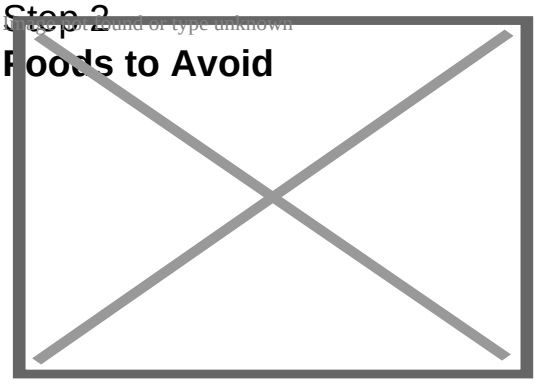
Here are the suggestions that resulted from my survery:

Step 1

Understanding Osteoarthritis
Osteoarthritis is due to a combination of factors, including genetics, past injury, joint use and overuse, and the aging process in general. The word "overuse" implies that it's a concern for serious athletes, as well as those who have stress on the joints caused by excess body weight. Losing just a little weight can have a huge positive impact on OA. Because arthritis is a disease of inflammation, the most effective — and logical — treatment is anything that fights inflammation. Management of arthritis usually starts with ibuprofen and other anti-inflammatory medications, eating anti-inflammatory foods, and improving weight and lifestyle. I will go into more detail on how to manage OA in the following steps and on the Food Cures Web site.

Step 2

Foods to Avoid



In order to reduce inflammation in your body, you should

dramatically limit your intake of pro-inflammatory foods. It sounds like you're already avoiding foods high in saturated fats — such as fatty meats, butter, whole and 2 percent milk, full-fat cheese, and rich desserts. However, there are a few other foods you should add to your "foods to avoid" list. Trans fats, which are man-made fats added to baked goods to give them a longer shelf life, are very dangerous and even worse than saturated fats for your health. The good news is that laws now require food manufacturers to list trans fats on nutrition labels — so they're easy to spot. Choose packaged foods that list 0 grams trans fat on the Nutrition Facts panel and don't list any "hydrogenated oils" — codeword for trans fats — in the ingredients panel. The other food group to avoid is simple and refined carbs — which set up a state of inflammation in the body. These foods include soda and other sweetened beverages, candy, sugary refined cereals, white-flour baked goods, and white rice, bread, and crackers.

Step 3



Your Water

Cartilage is 65 to 80 percent water, so staying hydrated is important for the health and lubrication of your joints. Maintaining proper hydration is even more important for individuals who suffer from gout. Water helps flush uric acid out of the body, and studies suggest staying hydrated may help prevent flare-ups. It isn't necessary to count the number of glasses of water you drink in a day — the latest research suggests that if you take time to drink a glass whenever you feel thirsty, you'll probably do fine. You are already drinking enough water, which is important for managing your arthritis. To spice things up, you might want to try flavoring your water with fresh fruit slices or drinking unsweetened green tea or herbal tea — there are so many delicious and fun varieties. And be sure to avoid sugary drinks like soda, sweetened water, fruit drinks, sweet tea, and froufrou coffee concoctions.

Step 4



rthritis

I know you don't smoke, but I just wanted to share with you a few good reasons to stay smoke-free: Smoking delivers toxins throughout the body, causing

inflammation and increasing the risk of arthritis. In one study, smokers were more than twice as likely to develop rheumatoid arthritis than people who didn't smoke. In addition, researchers from a multicenter study reported in 2005 that smokers had a greater risk of osteoarthritis of the knee, possibly because smoking interferes with the body's ability to repair its own cartilage. The bottom line is that staying smoke-free is a wise choice!

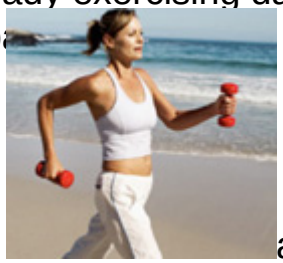
Step 5

Maintain Your Healthy Weight

One of the bes  do for your arthritis is maintain a healthy lifestyle and weight — and you're already there! Being overweight can put added physical stress on your joints, which can aggravate arthritis (particularly osteoarthritis) and increase your levels of pain. An unhealthy weight can also promote inflammation, which as I've mentioned is the root of arthritis. Another reason to keep eating right and exercising!

Step 6

Exercise and Managing Arthritis

You're already exercising daily — good for you! Many people stop exercising at the first twinge of p  this can be a big mistake. Exercise can actually be a great tool for fighting arthritis. It can help you lose or maintain weight, which reduces the overall stress impact on joints. Strong muscles can absorb shock from daily movements, keep joints stable, and protect against additional joint injury. Stretching and yoga can improve flexibility and range of motion and reduce joint stiffness. Swimming and water aerobics allow free movement without added stress on the joints. Walking is another manageable, low-impact form of aerobic exercise appropriate for most individuals with arthritis. All good reasons to maintain your active lifestyle!

Good luck changing whatever needs changing to find the pain free movement you long for.

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betsyjbell