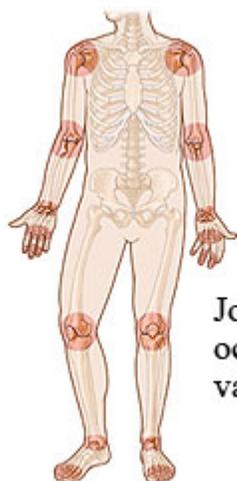


# Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) Diet: Care Instructions



Joint pain  
occurring in  
various joints

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## Your Care Instructions

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The best diet for people with rheumatoid arthritis is a healthy, balanced diet. This is one that is low in saturated fat and salt and high in fiber and complex carbohydrate (whole grains, beans, fruits, and vegetables).

Fish oil (omega-3 fatty acids) has a modest effect in reducing inflammation, and eating fish may improve symptoms.

People who have rheumatoid arthritis have a high risk of developing osteoporosis. To help prevent this disease, get plenty of calcium and vitamin D.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

## How can you care for yourself at home?

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- Try to eat at least 2 servings of fish each week. Oily fish, which contain omega-3 fatty acids, include:
  - Tuna.
  - Salmon.
  - Mackerel.
  - Lake trout.
  - Herring.
  - Sardines.
- If you're pregnant, talk to your doctor about eating fish. Pregnant women shouldn't eat certain types of fish that have high mercury content.
- You can get calcium and vitamin D by drinking milk fortified with vitamin D. Four glasses of milk a day provide about 1,200 milligrams (mg) of calcium. Other common foods with calcium:

- Yogurt (plain or low-fat). An 8-ounce serving provides 415 mg of calcium.
- Cheddar cheese. A 1½-ounce serving provides 306 mg.
- Milk (skim, 2%, or whole). A 1-cup serving provides about 300 mg.
- Cottage cheese (1% milk fat). A 1-cup serving provides 138 mg.
- If you can't eat or drink dairy foods, you can get calcium and vitamin D from:
  - Calcium-fortified orange juice. A 1-cup serving provides 500 mg of calcium.
  - Calcium-enriched soy milk. A 1-cup serving provides 282 mg of calcium.
  - Almonds. A 1-ounce serving (about 24 nuts) provides 75 mg of calcium.
  - Canned salmon. A 3-ounce serving provides 180 mg of calcium.
  - Tofu (firm, made with calcium sulfate). A ½-cup serving provides 204 mg.
- You may need to take a calcium supplement to make sure you are getting the calcium you need.

## Where can you learn more?

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Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patiented>

Enter **Q201** in the search box to learn more about **"Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) Diet: Care Instructions"**.

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