

Nutritional Supplementation For Optimum Joint Health

In addition to a healthy diet, people seeking to improve their joint health may consider nutritional supplements to improve their intake of essential vitamins and minerals. These supplements can reduce pain and inflammation and help repair damaged tissues. Although there are a number of different supplements available, studies have found a few that appear to be particularly beneficial for joint health.

Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant that can reduce cartilage loss and disease progression. It can also aid in inflammation, [relieve pain](#), and stimulate cells to improve bone density. Vitamin C is especially important for patients who rely on nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), which can reduce levels of vitamin C. Patients might also consider rosehips, which contain Vitamin C. Although studies of this supplement are relatively new, they generally show that patients who take rosehips experience a decrease in pain and inflammation.

Vitamin D is an important nutrient for people with joint pain, as it helps maintain strong bones by regulating calcium and phosphorous. While calcium intake can be achieved fairly easily with a proper diet, a supplement may be needed for Vitamin D. This is especially true for patients taking oral corticosteroids, who have a higher risk of being deficient in Vitamin D.

Turmeric, or curcumin, is a useful supplement for reducing pain, stiffness, and inflammation. A [2010 trial published in the Alternative Medicine Review](#) found that one turmeric supplement, Mervia, provided long-term improvement in function and decreased pain in patients with knee osteoarthritis. A [small 2012 study](#) found that it reduced joint pain and swelling in patients with rheumatoid arthritis better than diclofenac, an NSAID. Another supplement,

ginger, has also been found to decrease joint pain and reduce inflammation as effectively as steroids.

Chondroitin, usually combined with glucosamine, is found in human cartilage and bone. Although studies have had mixed results, one long term study found the combination to be effective in relieving the symptoms of osteoarthritis. While the research is ongoing, sometimes focusing on only chondroitin, the supplement remains popular.

Fish oil contains omega-3 fatty acids that may aid in treating arthritis by reducing inflammation and stiffness. A [2010 study](#) from the Nutrition Society found that fish oil decreased joint tenderness and stiffness in patients with rheumatoid arthritis, reducing or eliminating the need for the use of NSAIDs. Similar studies indicated a similar effect on patients with osteoarthritis.

Patients should always be careful when choosing supplements, as excess amounts can be dangerous. They should also discuss the decision with their doctors, as different medical backgrounds may yield different reactions. While a healthy and nutrient-rich diet is still vitally important, supplements can benefit patients deficient in certain nutrients or seeking natural alternatives to NSAIDs.

References

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