

DIETARY AND LIFESTYLE CHANGES



Forty-four million north Americans suffer with joint pain and stiffness. Many doctors offer their patients' pain killers and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs that can inhibit the formation of cartilage and only make the problem worse. Side effects from NSAID's can include gastro-intestinal bleeding, kidney damage and hearing loss.

Natural therapies based on diet, lifestyle and herbal therapy address the cause and not just the symptoms of joint pain and stiffness. The north American diet contains many acid foods such as fatty meats, dairy, bacon, hot dogs and lunch meats which are toxic to joints. Nightshade vegetables, including, tomatoes, potatoes, peppers and eggplant should be avoided. Other foods to eliminate are salty or spicy foods, chocolate, caffeine and pop as these are harmful to the cartilage which make up the joint tissue. You may be asking, what can I eat?

To control the underlying cause of joint pain, the joints require carotenoids, flavonoids and Vitamin C which are abundant in fresh organic vegetables, fruit, grains and legumes. Vitamin C is necessary for the formation of collagen, cartilage and bones. Wheat germ and green tea reduce free radical damage. Omega-3 from salmon, tuna, halibut and flax oil can help to reduce the inflammatory response which is associated with joint pain.

Lifestyle changes such as walking and swimming help to stabilize joints by increasing muscular strength and controlling weight. Excess weight can cause small tears in cartilage upon impact. According to a recent study from the University of Maryland School of Medicine a weight loss of 15 pounds resulted in a 50% decline in joint pain.