Anti-inflammatory eating guide

for rheumatoid arthritis

Practical, simple and realistic tools for everyday life

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Before you start

- Food doesn't replace your treatment, but it can support your health.
- What matters isn't perfection but the pattern you repeat most days.
- You can eat better with accessible foods and a limited budget.
- A guide designed for patients in Panama.

What is an anti-inflammatory pattern? Not a fad diet

- It's how you eat most days
- Prioritize plant-based, minimally processed foods
- Look for more fiber, color, variety and home cooking
- It doesn't replace your medications: it complements treatment

More of this / Less of this

✅ More

- vegetables
- fruits
- lentils, beans and chickpeas
- oats, rice, corn and tubers
- avocado, peanuts and seeds
- water and unsweetened drinks

✖ Less

- frequent red and pork meats
- processed meats
- fried foods
- ultra-processed foods
- sugary drinks
- eating out every day

¿En qué ayuda al cuerpo?

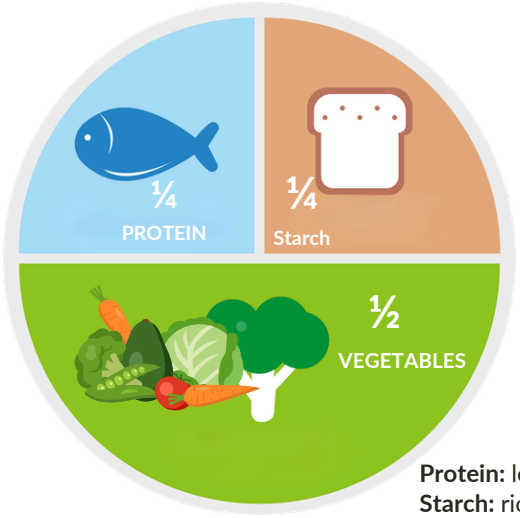
Protects your heart
Improves cardiovascular health

Keeps your muscle
Supports strength and function

Supports your gut
Feeds your microbiome, eases digestion

Gives you energy
Steadies glucose, avoids crashes

Weight control
Helps maintain a healthy weight



Your base plate and how to maintain it

- Buy 1–2 fruits for each day
- Keep a cooked legume ready in the fridge
- Cook a double amount to use the next day
- Fill your plate with vegetables first
- Use foods you already know and can find

Protein: lentils, beans, chickpeas, tofu, chicken or fish.
Starch: rice, corn, potato, yuca, yam, plantain. **Healthy fat**: avocado, peanuts, seeds.

Don't seek perfection, seek consistency. If you eat better today than yesterday, you're moving forward.

Educational material for patients. It does not replace an individual evaluation by your doctor or nutritionist.

Shop smart in Panama and take action

Shopping guide

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Budget-friendly vegetables

cabbage · carrot · tomato · cucumber · squash · chayote · onion · culantro · eggplant · green beans

Seasonall fruits

papaya · pineapple · watermelon · melon · banana · mango · mandarin · orange · guava · passion fruit

Affordable proteins

lentils · beans · chickpeas · pigeon peas · peanuts · tofu when applicable · egg or chicken if part of your diet

Bases for your meals

oats · rice · corn · potato · sweet potato · yuca · yam · plantain

1. Buy what's in season
2. Big bags of legumes and oats
3. Freeze portions
4. Cook a base pot for several days
5. You do not need «fitness» foods

5 simple, budget-friendly combinations

Oats + banana + peanuts	Rice + lentils + cabbage & tomato salad	Yuca or potato + beans + cucumber & carrot	Squash soup + chickpeas + fruit	Corn tortilla + beans + tomato+ avocado
Filling breakfast	Classic and affordable	Energy and fiber	Comforting	Quick and complete

Simple changes that add up

More home-cooked meals	Fewer meals out	Lentils, beans or chickpeas	Fewer frequent red and pork meats
Water or unsweetened	Less soda and sugary juice	Plate with visible vegetables	Less frying as a base
Fortified plant drink or yogurt	Fewer dairy products, if you want to cut back	Plan 2 meals	Less improvisation

SMART goals + 7-day challenge

S	M	A	R	T
Specific Define what you'll do	**Measurable** You can count or see progress	**Achievable** Realistic for your situation	**Relevant** Makes sense for your health	**Time-bound** Set when you'll achieve it

Examples: "This week I'll eat 1 fruit a day for 7 days" · "I'll prepare lentils or beans twice this week".

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Ate a fruit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Put more vegetables on my plate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Drank water instead of soda	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ate a legume	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cooked at home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Planned my meals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Choose a simple and healthy choice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Consistency beats perfection. Improving the whole pattern is worth more than one "magic" food.