# CAN A PLANT-BASED PROGRAM CALM RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS?

## IN RANDOMIZED TRIALS, DISEASE ACTIVITY DROPPED.

**0.9** point bigger drop in RA disease activity (DAS28) in 16 weeks with a whole-food, plant-based lifestyle program vs. usual care (randomized, 83 people). Still there a year later.

Walrabenstein et al. · Rheumatology (Oxford) · 2023 [1]

## WHAT DID THEY CHANGE?

- **Whole-food, plant-based eating**
- **Physical activity**
- **Stress management**
- **Stayed on their RA treatment**

*A full lifestyle program, added to medication, not instead of it.*

## WHAT SHOULD YOU ASK YOUR DOCTOR?

1. **Could changing my diet help my RA alongside my treatment?** [1]
2. **Can I try a plant-based diet and exercise program while I stay on my medication?** [1]
3. **How will we tell whether it is working?**
4. **If my disease calms down, could we talk about lowering my medication?** [2]

**1 year** later, people who fasted briefly, then ate vegan and later vegetarian, still had less joint pain, swelling and stiffness than those on their usual diet (randomized, 53 people).

Kjeldsen-Kragh et al. · The Lancet · 1991 [3]

! **Work with your doctor, not around them. Never stop a medication on your own.**

**BOTTOM LINE** Food can turn down RA. Randomized trials, on top of treatment, with a net drop in medication a year later.

## MORE OF THE EVIDENCE

- In the Plants for Joints trial, 83 people with RA did a 16-week program of whole-food, plant-based eating, physical activity and stress management, or usual care. Disease activity improved more in the program group. [1]
- One year later the improvement held, and participants had a net decrease in medication. [2]
- In a Lancet trial, 27 patients who fasted briefly and then followed a vegan and later vegetarian diet improved in joint pain, swelling, morning stiffness and grip strength, compared with 26 on their usual diet. The benefits were still there after one year. [3]

**Keep in mind:** Participants knew which group they were in, and the programs combined diet with other changes.

### WE TAKE ZERO PRESCRIPTIONS.

That's our choice, not a rule for you. Some prescriptions save lives, like antibiotics for an infection. If you are not changing your diet, stay on the medications your doctor prescribes. If you go plant-based, keep up with your blood work. That way your doctor can safely reduce your medications or take you off them altogether.

**I'm not anti-medicine. I'm pro-health.**

Don't take my word for any of this. Check it with your favorite AI, read the original studies, then bring them to your doctor.

## NOTES FROM MY APPOINTMENT

### DATE AND DOCTOR

### WHAT WE AGREED TO TRY

### WHEN WE WILL RECHECK

## SOURCES


[1] Walrabenstein W, et al. Rheumatology (Oxford), 2023. A multidisciplinary lifestyle program for rheumatoid arthritis: the "Plants for Joints" randomized controlled trial. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36617162/

[2] Wagenaar CA, et al. RMD Open, 2024. Long-term effectiveness of a lifestyle intervention for rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis: 1-year follow-up of the "Plants for Joints" randomised clinical trial. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38413171/

[3] Kjeldsen-Kragh J, et al. The Lancet, 1991. Controlled trial of fasting and one-year vegetarian diet in rheumatoid arthritis. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/1681264/



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