

general nutrition recommendations

Lupus

A balanced diet is important for everyone, but for those with lupus certain food choices may worsen symptoms and contribute to other health conditions common in those with lupus. There is no one diet that is best for those with lupus, but below you will find some nutrition suggestions for helping to manage your condition.

Nutrition Recommendations	
Due to the higher risk of heart disease for those with lupus, it's important to follow a heart healthy diet.	
Colorful Foods Choose a variety of colorful fruits & vegetables every day.	Lean Proteins Include a lean protein at every meal: chicken, fish, low-fat dairy products, beans, nuts, or seeds.
Include Healthy Fats Include food sources high in omega-3 fatty acids and monounsaturated fats: almonds, walnuts, olives, olive oil, canola oil, salmon, albacore tuna, chia seeds, flax seeds and avocado.	Limit Trans Fats Limit foods high in saturated and <i>trans</i> fats: pastries, doughnuts, cakes, cookies, red meat, and full-fat dairy products, such as ice cream.
Watch Salt Intake Watch your salt intake. Most sodium in the diet doesn't come from the salt shaker but from processed foods. Examples include canned soups, entrees and sauces, condiments, smoked or cured meats, frozen dinners and packaged baking mixes.	Whole Grains Include a variety of fiber-rich whole grain products every day: brown rice, oats, whole grain bread, whole grain pasta, quinoa, barley and rye.
Choose Low-Fat Dairy Select low-fat or fat-free dairy products.	Low Added Sugars Choose foods & beverages without or low in added sugars.
Portion Sizes Pay attention to portion sizes.	

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Common Problematic Foods

Problematic foods differ per person but may increase the likelihood of lupus flares when eaten on a regular basis. Below are common foods to avoid for those with lupus:

Garlic

Garlic, usually known for its health properties, may be harmful for those with lupus. Components of garlic, including allicin, ajoene, and thiosulfinates, can intensify the immune response, which may be unsafe for those with an autoimmune condition like lupus. Garlic has been shown to cause an increase in lupus symptoms, therefore those with lupus should avoid cooking with or consuming foods with garlic.

Alfalfa

Alfalfa contains an amino acid called L-canavanine. This amino acid may stimulate the immune system, causing inflammation and lupus symptom flares.

Alcohol

Alcohol should be avoided. When combined with certain lupus medications, alcohol can be particularly damaging to organs, including the liver and stomach.

Nightshades

There's no clear scientific evidence, but some may find that nightshades, a class of vegetables, including tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, and potatoes, cause an increase in inflammation and lupus symptoms.