

## Anti-inflammatory Healthy Joints Salad

### Salmon & Roasted Root Veggie Salad

Serves: 4

In a joint, bones do not directly contact; they are cushioned by cartilage and synovial membranes that produce fluid to lubricate. With overuse injuries and age, joints become stiffer, less flexible, and sometimes painful because cartilage thins (which acts as a shock absorber) and synovial fluid decreases.

Eat real food. In general, a nutrient-dense, anti-inflammatory, whole foods way of eating is beneficial for joint and overall health. Sound familiar? Studies confirm that the Mediterranean Diet helps arthritis by decreasing inflammation and often leads to weight loss which can lessen joint pain. A Mediterranean eating lifestyle has many other health benefits too.



**Beets** are an antioxidant anti-inflammatory powerhouse from betalains that protect cells from damage. Betalain extract [studies](#) showed relief from osteoarthritis joint pain. They are unique in their cardiovascular benefits too. Nitrates and potassium in beets help open blood vessels which can reduce blood pressure, improve [brain function](#), and [athletic performance](#).

**Sweet potatoes** contain beta-carotene and anthocyanin, potent antioxidants that help prevent joint damages caused by free radicals and reduce the risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis and other inflammatory conditions (such as NAFLD). They are also a great source of fiber, vitamin C, and potassium. Study [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

**Salmon** (and other fatty fish), contain substantial amounts of omega-3 fatty acids, important for cell membrane health and anti-inflammatory. Omega-3s EPA and DHA in fish fight inflammation and [studies](#) have found regular ingestion of these via food and supplementation reduce morning stiffness, joint stiffness, and pain.

**Spinach** and other dark leafy greens are packed with antioxidants (such as vitamins A, C, E, K) that protect cells from damage. Vitamin C helps produce collagen, a major component of cartilage.

## Salmon & Roasted Root Veggie Salad

### Ingredients:

- 4 medium beets, peeled, and diced
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, scrubbed and diced
- 6 tbsps. Extra virgin olive oil
- 1 ¼ pounds salmon fillet
- 2 tbsps. Lemon juice
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp turmeric
- 8 cups baby spinach
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds

### Preparation:

1. Arrange 3 oven racks equidistant in the oven. Preheat to convection bake 375°F.
2. Line 2 baking sheets and 1 glass baking dish (just large enough for salmon) with parchment paper.
3. Place diced sweet potato on one sheet and diced beets on the other. Drizzle each with 1 tablespoon olive oil, some salt and pepper, and mix to combine. Spread out in single layer.
4. Place sweet potatoes and beets in oven on racks 1 and 2 and bake 15 minutes.
5. Place salmon in baking dish and place in oven on rack 3.
6. Convection bake 15-20 minutes until salmon is just cooked through and vegetables are tender.
7. Meanwhile, whisk together 4 tablespoons olive oil with the lemon juice, mustard, and turmeric. Add salt and pepper to taste.
8. Divide spinach between 4 plates and top with salmon, sweet potato, and beets. Sprinkle with pumpkin seeds and drizzle with dressing. Enjoy!

### Variations:

- Wilted Spinach: slightly wilt spinach with a little olive oil and sprinkle of water in a large sauté pan on the stovetop.
- Swap spinach for other greens such as arugula, baby spinach, Bok choy, etc.

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