

The 8 Best Supplements for Autoimmune Disease

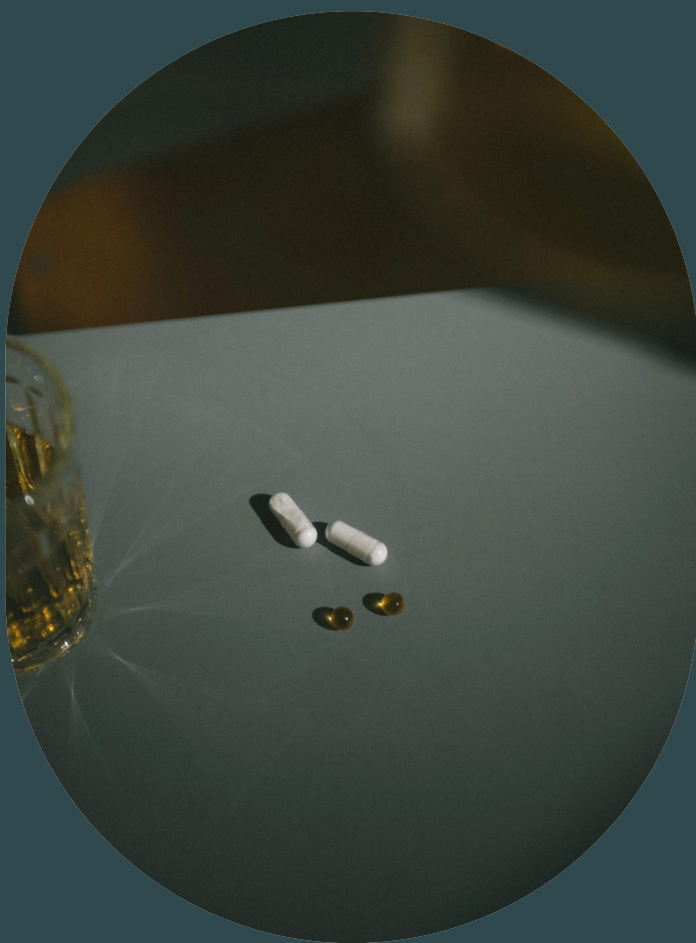


BY
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WellTheory

The 8 Best Supplements for Autoimmune Disease

Can supplements for autoimmune disease actually help? Autoimmune diseases can be complex and confusing, with no clear-cut treatment path. While many people turn to supplements as a way to manage symptoms and get some relief, not all supplements are equal. So which supplements are best for autoimmune disease? Read on to learn about the 8 supplements backed by research to support autoimmune health.



A Quick Refresher on Autoimmune Disease

Autoimmune disease occurs when the immune system attacks and destroys healthy cells in the body. In autoimmune disease, the immune system produces autoantibodies — antibodies that lose the ability to tell the difference between the body and foreign invaders, and begin to attack the body's own cells, tissues, and organs. Typically, autoantibodies are kept under control through immune function, but those who develop autoimmunity have autoantibodies that malfunction, either due to genetic predisposition or environmental lifestyle factors. These factors may include the food you eat, the way you manage stress, the quality of sleep you get, the chemicals you are exposed to, and the role movement plays or doesn't play in your life.

([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

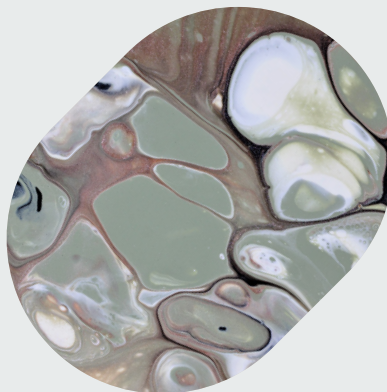
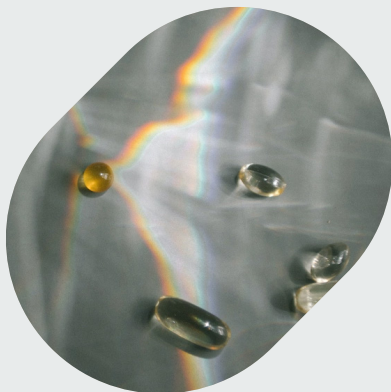


Benefits of Supplements on Autoimmunity

Approximately 80% of chronic diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, stroke, dementia, and cancer, are affected by lifestyle choices. While nutritional supplementation is just one lifestyle choice, it is a powerful action to incorporate into your daily routine that can have a significant effect on your autoimmune condition expression and quality of life. The 8 best supplements for autoimmunity have the ability to:

- Balance nutrient deficiencies
- Improve gut and nerve health
- Help with pain management
- Regulate your body's inflammatory response
(thereby reducing symptom expression and thus improving overall wellbeing!)

([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))





The 8 Best Supplements for Autoimmune Health

01



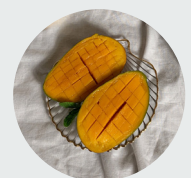
Curcumin

Curcumin is a natural compound found in the turmeric root (which gives turmeric its yellow color) that has become increasingly popular for its potential health benefits, including its ability to reduce inflammation. Curcumin has anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antidiabetic, and anticancer properties and is considered an appropriate alternative to nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), which can have serious side effects with long term use.

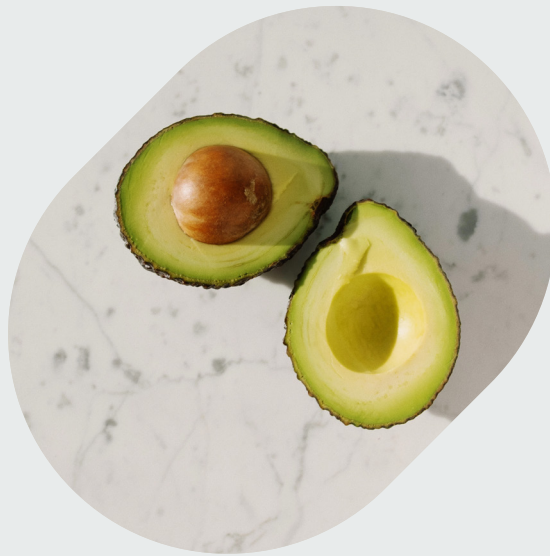
Clinical trials have shown curcumin supplementation can reduce symptoms of ulcerative colitis and can improve renal function and decrease renal injury in those with lupus. While curcumin can have mild side effects including bloating, nausea, and dyspepsia (and should not be taken if you have ulcers), there have been over 120 clinical trials showing a range of effectiveness in blocking inflammatory cytokines, which are small proteins that help control the growth and activity of cells within the immune system and blood. This means curcumin supplementation may help with inflammatory symptoms such as joint pain, muscle stiffness, and fatigue. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

Foods Containing Curcumin

- turmeric, mango, ginger



02



Glutathione

Glutathione is a powerful antioxidant that plays a key role in the antioxidant defense system. It is the primary detoxifier in the body, binding to free radicals and toxins, and impacts our overall quality of health. Glutathione, composed of three amino acids (cysteine, glycine, and glutamate), is found in every cell of the body but is concentrated in the liver. The antioxidant defense system is typically lacking in those with chronic inflammatory diseases, and maintaining adequate levels of glutathione is critical. However, because the body synthesizes glutathione, supplementing with oral glutathione directly has not shown to affect glutathione levels. For this reason, supplementing with the amino acids that make up glutathione (cysteine, glycine, and glutamate) is probably best.

Inadequate nutrition, daily stress, medications, and illness are all variables capable of depleting glutathione levels. If these environmental and lifestyle based variables are chronic, the body can stop creating glutathione almost entirely, resulting in oxidative stress and inflammatory responses. Those with lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's, and multiple sclerosis typically have high markers of oxidative stress or inflammation, and increasing glutathione by supplementing with its amino acids of cysteine, glycine, and glutamate may be worthwhile to help reduce inflammation and oxidative stress markers.

([Source](#), [Source](#))

Foods Containing Glutathione

- brussel sprouts, kale, spinach, avocados





03

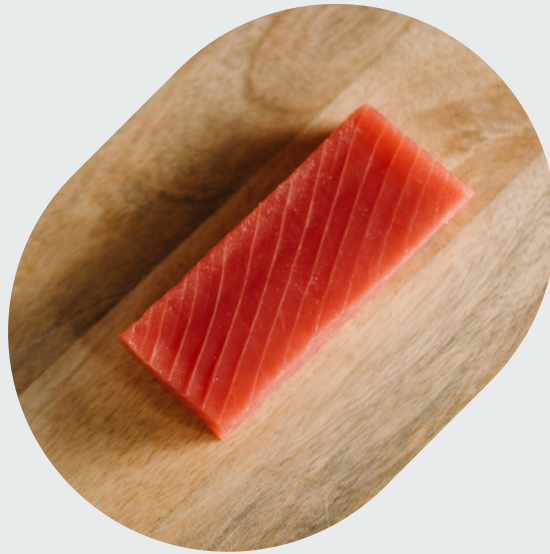
NAC

N-acetylcysteine (NAC) is an amino acid that has been used for many years to treat numerous medical conditions due to its antioxidative properties. For example, the common environmental contaminant trichloroethene (TCE), found in household stain removers, adhesives, sealants, cleaning wipes, and paints, can induce autoimmunity in both humans and animals. Given that we are frequently exposed to TCE, with or without our knowledge, the oxidative stress that TCE creates in the body is a problem that may be partially solved with NAC supplementation. NAC supplementation has been shown to reduce TCE-triggered oxidative stress and reduce autoimmunity markers, suggesting it could be a worthwhile preventative or therapeutic measure if you have an autoimmune disease and high inflammatory markers. (Note that the FDA is currently allowing NAC to be marketed as a dietary supplement, but not as a medical treatment.) ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

Foods Containing NAC

- grass fed meat, tuna, lentils, eggs





04

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Omega-3 fatty acids are essential fatty acids that are crucial for human health, particularly for those with autoimmunity. These vital nutrients help regulate many physiological processes, including metabolism, inflammatory response, and brain function (making it especially supportive for those with brain fog).

A previous animal study has shown omega-3 fatty acids help protect against rheumatoid arthritis, and there may be therapeutic benefits in omega-3 supplementation not only for those with rheumatoid arthritis but also those with lupus and multiple sclerosis. Fish oil supplementation has been shown in clinical trials to be beneficial for those with chronic inflammatory conditions, with consumption resulting in lowered use of anti-inflammatory drugs and decreased disease activity. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

Foods Containing Omega-3 Fatty Acids

- salmon, tuna, flax seeds, chia seeds, seaweed, edamame





05

Resveratrol

Resveratrol is a polyphenol, a compound found in plants that has been shown to have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Resveratrol supplementation shows promise in reducing disease progression in lupus, irritable bowel disease, and type 1 diabetes. This supplement has a powerful effect on autoimmune diseases because of its ability to decrease pro-inflammatory cytokines and increase anti-inflammatory cytokines, which can result in considerable relief from chronic intestinal inflammation from inflammatory bowel disease. ([Source](#), [Source](#))

Foods Containing Resveratrol

- blueberries, cranberries, grapes, mulberries, cocoa



06



Vitamin B Complex

Vitamin B complex is a group of essential vitamins that play an integral role in maintaining optimal health. But do B vitamins help with autoimmunity? Research shows B vitamins can improve the composition of the gut microbiome, supporting the metabolism of beneficial bacteria, and suppressing growth of negative bacteria. This is significant for immune function, given that 70% to 80% of the immune system is located in the gut. So yes, B vitamins can support those with autoimmunity.

Beyond gut and immune health, B vitamins are essential for cellular and metabolic health as well. Vitamin B deficiency can actually damage the myelin sheath (the protective layer of fat that coats nerves and allows for healthy nerve firing), making vitamin B supplementation especially therapeutic for those with multiple sclerosis.

Chronically low levels of vitamin B can result in neuroinflammation and neurodegeneration, so adding a vitamin B complex supplement to your health regimen may be appropriate if you have autoimmunity and struggle with gut and nerve issues. Vitamin B supplementation may likely also benefit those with autoimmune pernicious anemia, celiac disease, and thyroid disorders, as they commonly have low B12 levels. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

Foods Containing Vitamin B Complex

- broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, spinach, oysters, clams, mussels, nutritional yeast





07

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is an essential nutrient that plays a crucial role in numerous physiological processes, both metabolic and immunologic in nature. In fact, over 130 studies show a relationship between vitamin D deficiency and the development of multiple autoimmune diseases, including lupus, multiple sclerosis, Crohn's, ulcerative colitis, and rheumatoid arthritis. Low vitamin D levels can cause increased disease flares and hospitalizations, and require steroid treatment. Vitamin D has been shown to work with vitamin A to decrease the inflammatory response of helper T cells, which produce many inflammatory chemicals. These helper T cells are commonly overactive in multiple sclerosis, psoriasis, and rheumatoid arthritis, so using vitamin D therapeutically can help lessen these abnormally high levels of inflammation. ([Source](#), [Source](#))

Foods Containing Vitamin D

- sunlight, salmon, tuna, eggs, beef liver





08

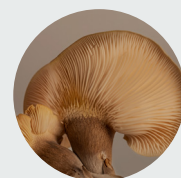
Zinc

Zinc is an essential mineral that plays a critical role in maintaining a healthy immune system, but much of the population is deficient in this helpful nutrient. In fact, the World Health Organization has estimated that 17% to 30% of people worldwide have a zinc deficiency. A zinc deficiency can promote disease development, may cause increased inflammation and gastrointestinal issues, and can make those with autoimmune diseases more susceptible to infections. Because zinc plays an important role in our immune functioning — by helping fight off viruses, protecting our cells from free radical damage due to environmental pollutants, and limiting the length of the common cold — it's important to consider the role zinc supplementation might play in your management care plan.

([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

Foods Containing Zinc

- grass fed meat, oysters, crab, lobster, mushroom, spinach, kale, lentils, black beans



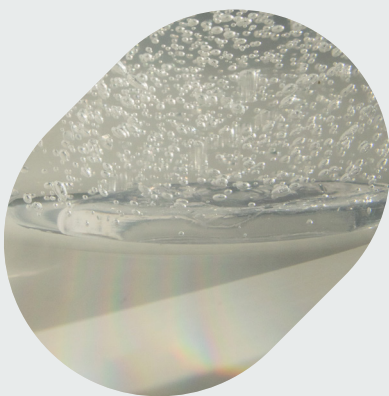


What to Consider Before Taking Supplements

Adding supplements to your daily health regimen can be an effective way to reduce symptoms and improve your overall autoimmune health. The vast benefits supplements can offer make them a powerful aspect of not only better immune health, but healthy aging. However, it's important to consider gut health, individual differences in biological function and needs, and the potential for interactions between supplement and medications.

Digestive function and overall gut health are important when starting supplements, because without a healthy gastrointestinal tract you won't be able to optimally absorb the nutrients you are adding in! [Improving digestive health](#) is one of the first things Welltheory's Care Team focuses on with our autoimmune care members.

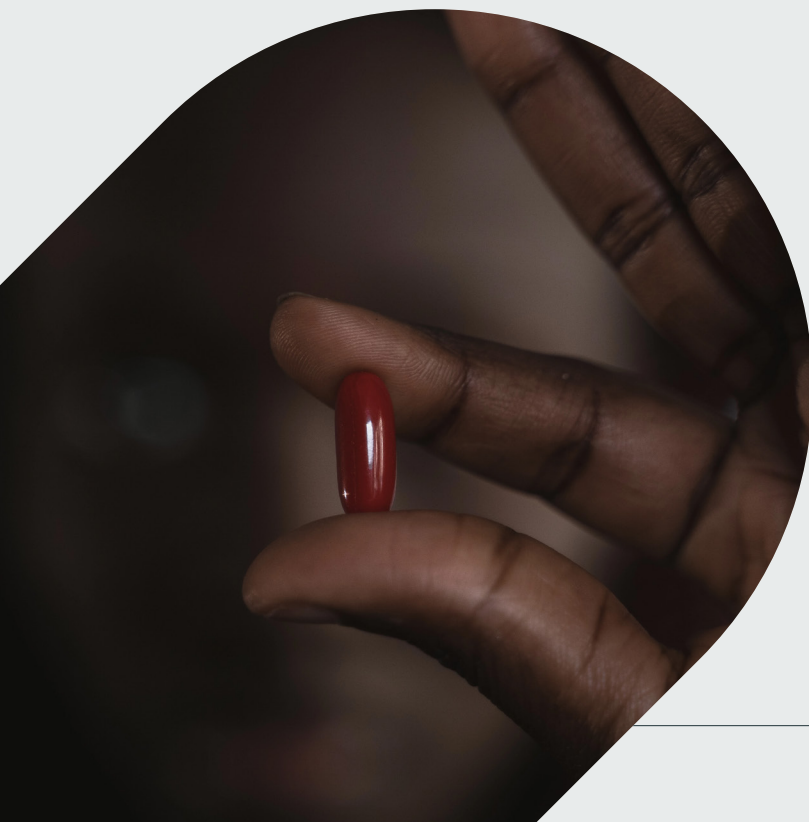
While these 8 supplements are helpful for those with autoimmunity, everybody is unique and there may be other particular supplements that would be beneficial for your condition and health goals. [Join WellTheory's autoimmune care membership for personalized supplement and lifestyle recommendations based on your current health status.](#)



The Bottom Line on Supplements for Autoimmune Disease

If you have an autoimmune disease, incorporating supplements into your daily routine can help reduce chronic inflammation and optimize your health. These 8 supplements — curcumin, glutathione, NAC, omega 3, resveratrol, vitamin B complex, vitamin D, and zinc — have the potential to lessen inflammation, support immune system function, increase gut and nerve health, increase energy, reduce brain fog, and even lower autoimmune markers. However, supplements should be just a part of the many measures you take to support your autoimmune health. They are meant to complement nutrition, physical movement, stress management, sleep hygiene, and any other protocols your health care provider may have recommended as part of your broader care plan.

Looking for personalized supplement recommendations and need a comprehensive care plan? WellTheory's Care Team can provide just that. [Learn how WellTheory's autoimmune care can reduce your symptoms and optimize your healing.](#)



A List of Supplement Food Sources for Autoimmune Health

If you'd rather get these nutritional supplements from food, take this list with you on your next grocery trip!

01 Foods High in Curcumin

turmeric
Mango ginger

02 Glutathione

brussel sprouts
kale
spinach
avocados

03 NAC

grass fed meat
tuna
lentils
eggs

04 Omega-3 Fatty Acids

salmon
tuna
flax seeds
chia seeds
seaweed
edamame

05 Resveratrol

blueberries
cranberries
grapes
mulberries
cocoa

06 Vitamin B Complex

broccoli
cabbage
spinach
brussel sprouts
oysters
clams
mussels
nutritional yeast

07 Vitamin D

salmon
tuna
eggs
beef liver

08 Zinc

grass fed meat
oysters
crab





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