



29 September 2016

Kate Donnison

Chief of Staff

Channel 9 – Brisbane News

Re: Arthritis and gout alert: How what you're eating is making your pain worse (9 September 2016).

Dear Ms Donnison,

The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) was pleased to see a discussion around arthritis, gout and nutrition on Nine News. However, we were disappointed that the advice provided in the segment by naturopath Katherine Maslin was not evidence-based.

The segment warned eating meat, coffee, and foods made with sugar and wheat can worsen symptoms, and that certain fruits and vegetables can ease symptoms.

Consumption of a wholesome, well-balanced, diet and ongoing medical support is important for anyone living with arthritis. We feel to suggest individual foods and nutrients can reduce pain is misleading.

To summarise the current scientific evidence:

- With the exception of one type of arthritis, there is no direct link between sugar, meat, coffee and wheat consumption and arthritis. Furthermore, evidence does not support a direct link between eating green leafy vegetables, berries, paw paw, pineapple or onions and a reduction in arthritic pain, as Ms Maslin suggests.
- There is reasonable evidence to support the consumption of omega-3 fatty acids for rheumatoid arthritis. These fats have been shown to have an anti-inflammatory effect by reducing the production of pro-inflammatory cytokines. There is limited evidence to support this same anti-inflammatory effect for patients with osteoarthritis.

It's also important to remember that when it comes to what we eat, there is no one-size-fits all approach. With this in mind, DAA recommends seeking individual nutrition advice from an Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) – and we'd love to see this message communicated to viewers in future nutrition stories you may be doing.

APDs are the only nutrition professional recognised by the Australian Government (including Medicare, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Disability Insurance Scheme) as well as most private health funds. They are the experts in nutrition – able to discuss nutrition science, in a practical and interesting way.

DAA has 23 media-trained Spokespeople (all APDs) available to speak on nutrition related stories. To organise an interview with any of our Spokespeople, please contact Felicity Curtain on media@daa.asn.au or telephone 0409 661 920.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Claire Hewat', is positioned below the 'Yours faithfully,' text.

Claire Hewat AdvAPD

CEO

Dietitians Association of Australia