10 Kitchen Tricks to Make Cooking Easier With RA

by ANNA SCANLON

Rheumatoid Arthritis in the Kitchen

If you have rheumatoid arthritis (RA), you know getting things done in the kitchen can create enormous difficulty sometimes.

Between swollen, stiff joints and nodules, sometimes it can feel impossible to get things done. However, there are a few things you can do to make things in the kitchen much easier, especially if you are cooking for several people at once.

Purchase a Hand Mixer or Electric Mixer

Don’t waste time mashing things with your hands and trying to mix tough batter with a spoon. This can cause unnecessary pain and discomfort.

Instead, purchase a hand mixer, which is often sold online reasonably cheap, and use it to stir up anything and everything. You can even use it in place of a whisk.

Electric mixers can also work wonders for those suffering from RA but are often a little bit more expensive. But if you can afford it, they are worth their weight in gold.

Freeze Meals

You are likely already aware that RA comes and goes, and some days you feel perfectly okay to create a buffet-type meal, while other times you’re exhausted and making a piece of toast is far too much effort.

If you plan ahead, you can create elaborate meals for your family and freeze them when you feel good, so when you’re feeling not so great, you can pop them in the oven and serve. That way, you won’t be sacrificing nutrition or a home cooked meal, but you’ll be saving yourself a ton of effort.

Make More Than Needed

If you live alone or it is just you and your partner, make more food than necessary, doubling or tripling the recipe when you feel good. This way, you have food to eat for several days afterward without having to lift a finger.

Simply open up your fridge, reheat in the microwave and you’re good to go.

Know When to Give in and Order Out

While takeout isn’t the healthiest option in the world, sometimes simply resting and ordering in is the best solution

for you.

If you're really feeling unwell and don't have any meals on reserve, go online and order some of your favorite dishes, or call up your favorite local restaurant. Sometimes grocery stores will also have a takeout section, making your night or day a little bit easier.

Pass the Buck

If you live with a partner or older children, make sure you aren't solely responsible for cooking the meals. Instead, alternate the responsibility to give yourself a rest now and then.

Take the time to involve older children in the cooking so when they are old enough, and they can take responsibility for creating their own meals for the family. If you live with a partner, make sure they are responsible for your meals at least a couple of times a week, giving yourself a night off every once in a while.

Install a Dishwasher

While this may not be feasible for everyone, a dishwasher is going to save you so much time and effort when it comes to cleaning up.

If you have lots of RA pain, it is a worthwhile investment, even if it means that you'll be paying it off for a while. Your aching joints will thank you for it.

Delegate Tasks or Wait Until Later to Clean

If you have children, one way to begin to teach them responsibility while giving yourself a rest is delegating tasks to them. This can include having them help you gather ingredients in the kitchen or tasking them with doing the cleaning up.

If you live alone, it is not unreasonable to have your partner help you clean up the kitchen and table once you have finished cooking. If you live alone and are running out of energy after cooking a meal, leave it for a couple of hours before attempting to clean up.

Don't stress yourself out too much in trying to keep a tidy home. Your health comes first, and you can always clean up later.

Wear Gloves

Many people with RA also suffer from Raynaud's syndrome, making it incredibly painful to touch frozen foods or deal with washing dishes in cold water. Purchase a pair of rubber gloves to wash your dishes or handle frozen items to keep the pain at bay.

Having a dishwasher can cut down on this issue a lot, however, if that is not feasible, a good pair of rubber gloves can help do the trick. Additionally, they can keep your hands soft despite regularly washing dishes.

Buy Vegetable Choppers

For many with RA, holding a knife to chop vegetables is incredibly uncomfortable during a flare. To remedy this, purchase a device that helps you chop vegetables quickly and easily.

There are many devices on the market, from those you simply run over a blade and cut, to electric choppers that will slice and dice your vegetables for you without any extra effort on your part. This is ideal for those with RA who live alone, as it can take a lot of the pain out of your cooking.

Have a List of Easy Meals On Hand

Remember you don’t need to create a lavish dinner every night. Instead, have a list of easy, nutritious meals you can make your family just in case you’re not feeling well.

These can include very simple dishes like pasta, pasta bakes, and ornate but simple salads. Many of these dishes take less than 30 minutes to prepare and require very minimal effort, making them perfect for those suffering from RA but also trying to save money by cooking meals at home.