

NIGHTSHADES

Nightshades are members of the Solanacean family of plants. Many arthritis patients suffer from sensitivity to these plants and find they have less pain by avoiding them. **Nightshades include potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, tobacco, and spices.** Before you jump to the conclusion that this is pretty simple, take a look at the hidden sources for these cripplers in our food:

POTATO

In the potato category, the number one vegetable in the U.S., obvious sources are baked potatoes, mashed potatoes, French fries, scalloped potatoes, pierogies, and foods that contain potato products. One place that can really foul up your detective work and keep you in pain is by unknowingly ingesting soups, biscuits and breads that are made with potato water, or processed foods (some yogurts and frozen seafoods) that contain potato starch, modified food starch, modified vegetable protein (or MVP), modified vegetable starch, or hydrolyzed vegetable protein. Potato starch is also in gluten-free baking powders. And do not forget vodka! This is merely fermented potato peelings. Sweet potato and yams are safe, as they are in a different botanical family. Also do not have fish and other fried foods that have been cooked in the same oil they make French fries in. Potato starch is also a common filler in prescription and non-prescription medications.

TOMATO

Tomatoes are obviously found in ketchup, spaghetti sauce and pizza. Many different condiment sauces like A-1 Steak Sauce, Worcestershire Sauce, and even brown sauces invariably contain tomato or other nightshades. But do not overlook baked beans, bolognas, barbecue sauces, meat loaf, gravies, and salad dressings like Thousand Island. Obviously, tomato juice, sun-dried tomatoes, and a bloody Mary would be out.

PEPPERS

Peppers include red, green, yellow, orange, jalapeno, chili, and pimento. Those microscopic red flecks in your pasta that you cannot see during a candle light dinner are crushed ground red pepper. **Note:** Black peppercorns are not in the same botanical family and they are safe to have.

SPICES

Spices of the nightshade family include cayenne, chili, curry, ground red pepper, crushed red pepper, and paprika. Paprika is often hidden on nuts and sprinkled over grilled fish. Seasoning mixes like Shake and Bake type coatings, snack crackers and cocktail crackers, mayonnaise, Hollandaise sauce, relishes, and seasoned salts contain hidden nightshades, depending upon individual recipes and the creativity of the chef. Nearly all processed foods and commercial salad dressings contain nightshade spices.

Curry also contains a number of nightshade spices. If you find pure **curry leaf**, that is fine. Any ingredient list that includes “spices” or unspecified “natural flavorings” usually contains one or more of the nightshade spices.

EGGPLANT

Eggplant (aubergine) is a nightshade, but is rarely disguised, being prepared as eggplant Parmesan, eggplant lasagna, or babaganosh (Middle Eastern dish)

TOBACCO

Tobacco is probably the most addicting and therefore toughest nightshade family member for people in pain to quit. Each puff on a cigar is like an intravenous injection of nightshades. Sometimes it takes years of smoking before the chronic pain sets in. Many prisoners of pain will never stop hurting until they stop smoking and then it takes 2-8 months to detoxify this from the body.