

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

A blood test may be used to test the uric acid level. It is common, however, that the blood level of uric acid may be normal even while a person is having a gout attack. If the diagnosis is in question, a sample of joint fluid may be taken and tested for gout crystals.

Most cases of gout affect the big toe joint, but other areas can also be affected. The pain can be quite severe and result in joint swelling and redness. Walking may be difficult and pressure of a shoe or even bed covers can be painful.

Treatment for the acute, severe pain may include anti-inflammatory medications (such as indomethacin or colchicine) or injections near the area. A sandal or a surgical shoe may be useful to relieve pain as well.

Your primary care doctor will treat this condition to prevent repeat attacks and possible joint damage.



Elevated levels of uric acid in the blood. The crystals deposit in joints, tendons, and surrounding tissues



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GOUT



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Gout is caused by an elevation in the uric acid within your blood. Uric acid is a natural substance in your body that is a breakdown product of proteins.

Gout occurs in people who either make too much uric acid, eat too many foods that are high uric acid, or in people who cannot get rid of excess uric acid from their blood.

Gout medications focus on helping your body produce less uric acid, or in helping your body eliminate excess uric acid.

WHERE DOES URIC ACID COME FROM?

You naturally produce most of the uric acid in your body, but there is a percentage (up to 20%) of uric acid that comes into your body through your diet. Adjusting your diet by avoiding foods high in uric acid can help reduce your chances of repeat gout attacks.

In addition, keeping yourself well hydrated with water is helpful. Some medications can make a gout attack more likely, including some blood pressure pills (water pills). Your doctor may adjust these medications if gout becomes a problem.

PREVENTION

Medications are sometimes prescribed to help with gout. However, there are other steps you can take to prevent problems with gout. One of the best ways to fight gout is to follow these dietary guidelines.

ELIMINATE the following:

- Liver
- Kidney
- Anchovies
- Sweetbreads
- Sardines
- Brains
- Heavy Gravies
- Heart
- Fish Roes
- Mussels
- Herring
- Beer/Wine
- Meat Extracts, Consommé

REDUCE the following to no more than one (1) serving per day:

- Meats
- Beans
- Fowl
- Peas
- Cauliflower
- Mushrooms
- Other Seafood
- Lentils
- Spinach
- Yeast
- Asparagus
- Whole Grain Cereals
- Fish

These foods do not cause gout:

- Fruits
- Milk
- Cheese
- Eggs
- Refined Cereals
- Nuts
- Spices (including Salt)
- Sugars and Sweets
- Vegetable Soups (Clear)
- Vegetables

