

## FAST FACTS: Gout

Gout is a common form of inflammatory arthritis and is very painful. Gout happens when you have too much uric acid in your blood that form sharp crystals in your joint. Uric acid is made when the body breaks down purines. All foods contain some level of purines, but some foods have a higher concentration, such as sugary foods and drinks, alcohol, and meats. There is no cure for gout, but you can effectively treat and manage gout with medication and self-management strategies.

### ✓ Key Points

- Gout generally impacts one joint at a time, often the big toe joint.
- You may also see gout in the knee, ankle, foot, hand, wrist, or elbow.
- Attacks are sudden and often causes extreme pain.
- Often redness and swelling occur around the painful joint.
- Gout is more common in men (3 to 1).
- Gout is more common in men over the age of 40.
- Women are more likely to get gout after menopause.
- Gout attacks generally last 3-10 days with the first 36 hours the most painful.



### ✓ Risks

- Overweight
- Drink alcohol often.
- Family history of gout.
- Have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, or heart disease
- Take certain diuretics (water pill) for high blood pressure or some medications for rheumatoid arthritis or psoriasis
- Have a history of gastric bypass surgery (weight loss surgery).

### ✓ Treatment

- Over-the-counter (OTC) anti-inflammatory medications, such as aspirin and ibuprofen
- Ice the swollen area.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Dietary modifications including decreases in the following- sugary drinks and foods, alcoholic beverages (especially beer), and meat (specially organ meats or game meats) and seafood (scallops, anchovies, & herring), meats and alcoholic beverages

✓ **What Else You Should Do**

- Write down and share information about your pain prior to and following treatment to share with your primary healthcare team.
- Use a [Pain Diary](#) regularly to note important information useful to your healthcare providers.
- Try a non-drug treatment and document the impact on your pain in your Pain Diary.

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**Resources:**

WebMD (2022) *What is Gout? What Causes It?* <https://www.webmd.com/arthritis/arthritis-gout>.

CDC (2020). *Gout*. <https://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/basics/gout.html#:~:text=quality%20of%20life%3F-.What%20is%20gout%3F,no%20symptoms%2C%20known%20as%20remission>.