

How Do you know If you have Gout?

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Do you enjoy consuming red meat, beer, red wine, excessive amounts of alcohol, rich sauces, seafood, organ meats, anchovies, herring, asparagus, and/or mushrooms? If so, you may be at risk of getting a **gout attack**. What exactly is **gout**?



Gout, a kind of arthritis, is caused by a build-up of sharp, needle-shaped urate crystals in the joint. These crystals are responsible for the pain and inflammation connected with this condition. The increase in **uric acid** is caused by raised **uric acid levels** in the bloodstream. The foods listed above are rich in purines, which are also naturally found in the body, and these **purines** tend to be broken down to **uric acid**. Under normal circumstances, uric acid is excreted through the kidneys and urine. When the body produces an excessive amount of uric acid, a person consumes a lot of purines in their diet or the filtering system are not properly removing enough uric acid, there is an excessive amount of uric acid leading to a gout attack.

How Would You Know If You Have Gout?

Typical display includes a person who wakes up in the middle of the night or in the morning with a sudden onset of a red, hot, swollen joint with no previous injury or trauma. Gout most commonly affects the big toe joint in the base. However, it can also affect other joints such as the midfoot, ankle, knee, elbow, hands as well as wrists. To begin with together with the first or second gout strike, the joint will appear normal on a typical X-ray. However over time with frequent gout episodes, the affected joint will have limited movement, a bony prominence and will seem as a damaged joint (arthritis) on an X-ray.

Who is a Risk?

Men have a higher rate of sustaining a gout attack but menopausal women are also prone to this painful condition. Also individuals with uncontrolled high blood pressure, diabetes, increased cholesterol levels as well as heart disease are also susceptible to gout. Medications such as diuretics and low-dose aspirin also increase uric acid levels. Finally, a purine-rich diet of the above mentioned foods and excessive alcohol consumption can lead to a gout attack. Therefore, avoidance includes limiting purine intake in the diet, limiting alcohol consumption, and being healthy and active.

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How is It Treated?

You go through the symptoms of a sudden onset of a red, hot, swollen joint, call your doctor instantly. If you go through the attack in the base or even ankle, call your local podiatrist but if in other important joints, you ought to contact you primary care doctor, orthopedist or rheumatologist. In the event that left untreated, you could produce firm nodules called tophi under the skin or kidney stones. Your doctor will take a good X-ray of the joint, but as mentioned most likely the films will be normal especially with the first or second attack.

Blood Testing Regarding Uric Acid is Unreliable for Gout

Definitive evidence of gout involves acquiring shared fluid and having it analyzed for the presence of the urate crystals. Treatment consists of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), a cortisone injection, oral steroidal drugs, and/or a medication called colchicine. In the event that you go through recurrent gout attacks, you may be prescribed Allopurinol or perhaps Probenicid - long-term medications just to prevent future gout attacks.

Dr. Peter Wishnie is a podiatrist who specializes in foot and ankle surgery. His office is in Piscataway/Hillsborough, NJ. His goals are in order to educate the public on the care of their feet and ankles and to get them functioning as quickly as possible. For more foot health tips on back heel discomfort, get a Free copy of the book, "You Do Not Have To Suffer With High heel Pain," by visiting their website: <http://www.stopfootpainfast>.

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