

GOUT :NATURAL SUPPORT

Steps to Prevent and Treat Gout

If left untreated, gout can become increasingly painful and lead to joint damage. If you experience sudden, intense pain in your joints, especially your big toe, it's important to seek help. Here is a recap of the essential steps to addressing gout:

1. **Food and Drink.** Avoid drinking soda, fruit juice, and other sweet beverages. Instead, drink plenty of pure water, as the fluids will help to remove uric acid from your body. Cut out organ meats and shell fish. Cut back on all forms of sugar and grain in your diet is also important.
2. **Limit the alcohol you drink (or eliminate it altogether).** Alcohol may raise the levels of uric acid in your blood.
3. **Exercise.** Being overweight increases your risk of gout, and regular exercise will help you to maintain a healthy weight and improve your overall health.
4. **Try tart cherries or concentrated tart cherry juice.** Tart cherries contain two powerful compounds, anthocyanins and bioflavonoids. Both of these compounds slow down the enzymes Cyclo-oxygenase-1 and -2, which helps to relieve and prevent arthritis and gout in your body.
5. **Folic acid** (10 to 75 mg a day) inhibits xanthine oxidase, an enzyme that is required for uric acid production.
6. Do not take **Niacin** in doses greater than 50 mg a day. Nicotinic acid can cause a gout attack.
7. **Bromelain** (125 to 250 mg three times a day) is an anti-inflammatory that can be helpful during an attack.
8. **Herbal Formula, Gout Resolve**

The gout free diet consists of low purine or modified purine diet may help prevent gout. The gout free diet to prevent gout puts and emphasis on dairy products, vegetable protein and water intake and a decrease in high purine foods. When this gout free diet is used, studies have shown that gout symptoms decrease and people can actually prevent the sudden, painful attacks of gout.

The gout free diet to prevent gout consists of avoiding certain foods and eating lots of cherries and strawberries, avoiding alcohol, drinking lots of water and maintaining a healthy weight.

Gout is a condition that causes inflammation and pain in the joints, especially the joint of the big toe. This causes painful feet. Gout is caused by an excess of uric acid in the body. Uric acid may build up because either the body creates too much uric acid or the uric acid is prevented from being excreted by the body. High blood pressure medications can prevent uric acid from being excreted. Purines consumed in the diet account for about 50% of the uric acid produced in the body.

Avoid foods with high purine levels.

This is not a complete list. Please ask your doctor for a list of every food to avoid.

Avoid eating anchovies, bouillon, brains, broth, consommé, dried legumes, goose, gravy, heart, herring, kidneys, liver, mackerel, meat extracts, mussels, mushrooms, organ meats, partridge, roe, sardines, scallops, shrimp, sweetbreads, yeast (bakers and brewers), yeast extracts.

The following foods should be eaten only in small amounts in the gout free diet to prevent gout: Poultry, fish and shellfish.

Along with the low or modified-purine diet, medications such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, corticosteroids and allopurinol are used to treat gout. In addition, it is important to

substitute dairy products such as milk, eggs and cheese for the missing purine containing foods in order to reduce the chances of developing gout. In a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, those that consumed these dairy products in large amounts reduced the risk of developing gout by 50%.

The following foods are good to eat on the gout free diet to prevent gout:

Butter, carbonated beverages, cereals and cereal products, cheese, cocoa, corn, cornbread, eggs, fruit juices, fruits, ice cream, milk, noodles, nuts, refined wheat flour, tapioca, vegetables, white bread and crackers and white rice. In a purine-modified diet, it is ok to have some protein foods not to exceed 100 grams per day. In one ounce of meat, there are 7 grams of protein. Bread and grains have about 3 grams of protein per serving. One serving is one slice of bread or a cup of grain. Protein can be obtained by eating milk, eggs and cheese because these foods are high in protein and low in purines.

In addition, the gout free diet to prevent gout includes maintaining a healthy body weight because when you are overweight or obese, toxins and metabolic by-products increase in the body and may increase your risk for developing gout.

Furthermore, the gout free diet to prevent gout includes the recommendation to avoid alcohol in excessive amounts. Alcohol raises levels of uric acid which leads to hyperuricemia and may cause gout.

Although it is important to drink lots of water to prevent gout, you should make sure that your drinking water is not contaminated with lead. You should also avoid lead in the environment because lead exposure increases your risk of developing gout.

Cherries and strawberries have shown to have a particular helpful effect on gout so these foods should be eaten every day on the gout free diet to prevent gout.

If you choose to follow the gout free diet to prevent gout, you should see your doctor first. Tell him which medications and vitamins that you are taking and be sure to see your doctor regularly for follow-up. If you carefully follow the gout free diet to prevent gout, maintain a healthy weight, watch your blood pressure, drink lots of water and exercise regularly avoiding joint stress, you should be successful in efforts to prevent gout.

Nutritional and Herbal Therapy for Gout

- Consume plenty of water. Dehydration may make gout worse.
- Limit purines in your diet. Purines will increase lactate production in your body. Lactate competes with uric acid for excretion. Foods that are high in purine content include beef, organ meats, sweetbreads, mussels, anchovies, herring, mackerel, and yeast. Foods with a moderate level of purines include meats, poultry, fish and shellfish not listed above. Other foods with a moderate level of purines include spinach, asparagus, beans, lentils, mushrooms, and dried peas.
- Do not drink alcohol beverages, especially beer.
- Eat a half a pound of **cherries** a day (fresh or frozen) for two weeks in order to lower uric acid and prevent further attacks. Cherries and other dark berries, such as hawthorn berries and blueberries, contain anthocyanadins that increase collagen and decrease inflammation. Cherry juice (8 to 16 ounces of a day) can also be helpful.
- **Folic acid** (10 to 75 mg a day) inhibits xanthine oxidase, an enzyme that is required for uric acid production.
- Do not take **Niacin** in doses greater than 50 mg a day. Nicotinic acid can cause a gout attack.
- **Bromelain** (125 to 250 mg three times a day) is an anti-inflammatory that can be helpful during an attack.

High-Fructose Corn Syrup Is a Major Risk Factor

Although gout is commonly blamed on eating too many high-purine foods, such as organ meats, anchovies, herring, asparagus and mushrooms, there is another clear culprit: high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS).¹⁰

Countless health problems have been linked to the consumption of HFCS, not the least of which is gout. A recent study showed that consumption of sugar-sweetened soft drinks is strongly associated with an increased risk of developing gout.¹¹

The study, done by U.S. and Canadian researchers, indicated that men who drank two or more sugary soft drinks a day had an *85 percent* higher risk of gout than those who drank less than one a month. In fact, the risk significantly increased among men who drank five to six servings of sugary soft drinks a week. Fruit juice and fructose-rich fruits, such as oranges and apples, also increased the risk.

This makes sense on many levels, but first and foremost because fructose is known to inhibit the excretion of uric acid. Fructose also reduces the affinity of insulin for its receptor, which is the principle characteristic of type 2 diabetes.¹³ Further, HFCS has been implicated in elevated blood cholesterol levels, and it has been found to inhibit the action of white blood cells in your immune system.

Many of the health conditions that HFCS causes, including high cholesterol and diabetes, also increase your risk of developing gout. Additionally, fructose converts more readily to fat than other sugars, making it a major risk factor for both diabetes and obesity -- another gout risk factor.

In a fructose metabolism study, it was noted that when two high-fructose breakfast drinks were consumed, the build-up of stored fat continued into the afternoon, during which time the quick conversion of fructose to fat remained active during digestion of the lunch meal.¹⁵ The study concluded that the higher the concentration of fructose in the diet, the higher the rate of fat conversion.

Frequently, fruit juices also have fructose added to them, and if you still believe that this is an acceptable form of sugar, think again. Fructose contains no beneficial enzymes, vitamins, minerals, or additional micronutrients. Instead, it actually leeches them from your body.¹⁶ Unbound fructose, found in large quantities in HFCS, can also interfere with your heart's use of vital minerals such as magnesium, copper, and chromium.

Hidden Fructose in Your Foods

You may think that avoiding fructose means just staying away from desserts and sweet drinks, but unfortunately there is more to it as fructose is hidden in many foods you would not even suspect.

According to biochemist Russ Bianchi, HFCS is "*intentionally mislabeled, or (uses) deceptively legally noncompliant names like: 'chicory,' 'inulin,' 'iso glucose,' 'glucose-fructose syrup,' 'dahlia syrup,' 'tapioca syrup,' 'glucose syrup,' 'corn syrup,' 'crystalline fructose,' and flat-out fraud 'fruit fructose,' or... 'agave'...*"¹⁷ Even processed meats and other foods you would never imagine contain HFCS.

Why? The commercial food industry embraces HFCS because it is easier to blend, and sweeter than table sugar. And it's also cheaper. Additionally, the food manufacturers can sell more products because they know that HFCS, like all sugar, has an addictive effect, and once your taste buds are

stimulated, you will want more and more.¹⁸ Sugar, and added salt, can stabilize food ingredients, enabling food manufacturers to keep it on the shelves longer.¹⁹

The industry has also started to air deceptive ad campaigns claiming that HFCS is all natural to counteract this information.²⁰ Fortunately you don't have to be deceived by them as you now know the truth. So, instead of drinking enormous amounts of sugar-laden sodas, fruit juice, and other sweet beverages that will only worsen or cause gout, your best choice will be to choose pure water, because the fluids will help to remove uric acid from your body.²¹

You can add small amounts (about a teaspoonful) of fresh-squeezed lemon or lime juice to your water for flavor. But use caution with higher quantities if you have issues with your insulin level, because too much added fruit juice can adversely affect that. Also, be sure to eliminate those cookies, cakes, pies, candy bars, and other sweets that can aggravate your gout just as badly as HFCS.²²

Limiting Alcohol Crucial for Success with Gout

Gout is often seen in association with hypertension, excessive alcohol consumption,³⁰ and coronary artery disease,³¹ so alcohol is a strong risk factor for this disease. In general, I believe alcohol should be reserved for people who have already achieved optimal wellness and therefore have their carbohydrates (sugars and grains) under control, and do not have disease conditions such as gout, diabetes, or other signs of ill health.³²

Although wine has been shown to have some health benefits, it may also increase your insulin levels, which is not only a risk factor for diabetes, but increased insulin levels have been linked with a shorter life span, in general.³³ So it needs to be used cautiously, especially if you have gout. Most importantly for those suffering with gout, alcohol may raise the levels of uric acid in your blood, and therefore could even initiate a gout attack, so it's wise to limit the alcohol you drink, or eliminate it altogether.

Avoid Drug Solutions for Gout Unless Absolutely Necessary

Over the years, medical science has used a number of pharmaceuticals in an attempt to treat gout. That list includes, among others, NSAIDs, Colchicine, corticosteroids, Corticotropin (adrenocorticotrophic hormone),³⁴ Febuxostat, Alopurinol, and Zylorid.³⁵ But even if drugs like these could cure gout, and there is little, if any, evidence they can, you still would have to deal with some very nasty side effects.³⁶ NSAIDs alone, for example, are known to have the following side effects:³⁷

- Gastrointestinal upsets including nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, decreased appetite
- Rash, dizziness, headaches, drowsiness
- Fluid retention
- Shortness of breath
- Kidney failure, liver failure, ulcers, prolonged bleeding after an injury.

Additionally, NSAIDs may increase your risk of potentially fatal stomach and intestinal adverse reactions (for example, bleeding, ulcers, and perforation of the stomach or intestines). These events

can occur at any time during treatment and without warning symptoms. NSAIDs (except low-dose aspirin) may also increase your risk of potentially fatal heart attacks, stroke, and related conditions.

Drugs such as Allopurinol and Colchicine, which work by either lowering your uric acid levels and decreasing crystal formation, or by simply blocking your body's natural inflammatory response, are also very commonly prescribed for gout. But these drugs also have very dangerous, long-term side effects, and gout is frequently regarded as a lifelong condition, so you may end up staying on these drugs for very long periods of time, which can wreak havoc on your health.

On the other hand, natural remedies will end up helping not only the problem they were meant for, but also other body issues as well, because they work holistically within your entire system. That said, because of the intense pain of a gout attack, you may still need some type of pain medication initially, typically an anti-inflammatory, until you can get the symptoms under control.³⁸ If you're looking for immediate relief in a natural form, try cayenne cream. Also called capsaicin cream, this spice comes from dried hot peppers. It alleviates pain by depleting your body's supply of substance P, a chemical component of nerve cells that transmits pain signals to your brain.

Exercise Can Dramatically Help

While exercise is not recommended while your joints are in pain or when it might cause further injury, once your gout is under control, exercise is needed as a necessary adjunct to a healthier lifestyle. Exercise will even help prevent further attacks by increasing circulation and normalizing your uric acids levels, which it does primarily by normalizing your insulin levels.³⁹ An exercise routine has other advantages as well. Studies have shown that it works as an effective antidepressant,⁴⁰ strengthens your immune system so it can fight off diseases like cancer,⁴¹ and it can even improve insulin resistance and reverse pre-diabetic conditions.⁴²

Fight Inflammation with Cherries and Strawberries

Tart cherries contain two powerful compounds, anthocyanins and bioflavonoids. Both of these compounds slow down the enzymes Cyclo-oxygenase-1 and -2, which helps to relieve and prevent arthritis and gout in your body.⁴³ Cherries, along with strawberries and other berries, are also a rich source of antioxidants. This means they help prevent or repair damage done to your body's cells by free radicals. The antioxidants replace the free radicals in your body before they can cause any damage. Dr. Wei, a nationally known, board-certified rheumatologist, recalled this story about the powerful effect of cherries on gout:

"Dr. Ludwig W. Blau, relating how eating a bowl of cherries one day led to complete relief from pain, sparked off the interest in cherries in the treatment of gout. Dr. Blau's gout had been so severe that he had been confined to a wheelchair. One day, quite by accident, he polished off a large bowl of cherries, and the following day the pain in his foot was gone. "(Dr. Blau) continued eating a minimum of six cherries every day, and he was free from pain and able to get out of his wheelchair. Dr. Blau's research led to many other people suffering from gout who reported being helped by cherries."

Dr. Wei said that good results have also been reported with strawberries, which may be due to the fact that this food helps your body eliminate uric acid.⁴⁴ There are a number of ways you can enjoy

your berries while they go to work benefiting your gout. If fresh cherries are out of season, or if you just want more variety, try concentrated cherry juice.⁴⁵

Cherry juice concentrate can contain about 55 to 60 tart cherries in every ounce. That's a single recommended serving, so in other words, you'd have to eat 55 to 60 cherries to get the same health benefit (and I don't recommend eating 55 to 60 cherries, as that is too much sugar... but with a concentrate, you can get the health benefit of the cherries without all the sugar).

While it may not be as easy to find organic, un-pasteurized tart cherry or strawberry juice, you can find it if you search on the Web, and local health food stores should be able to order it for you also. Just make sure any juice you buy is, ideally, organic, un-pasteurized, and has no added HFCS or other sugars.

Another option is to purchase frozen or canned tart cherries or strawberries. Organic is best, but if you can't locate any, you can use regular varieties in a pinch. Normally it's best to avoid non-organic canned or frozen goods, since they often have residual pesticides and additives, along with HFCS and other sweeteners and preservatives.

A Recap: The Top Steps to Prevent and Treat Gout

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