

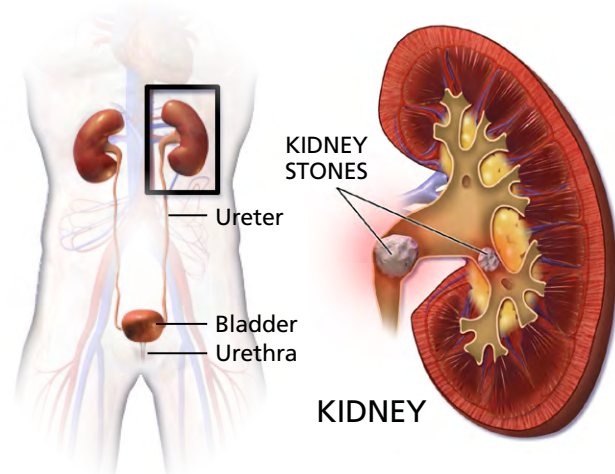
# IF YOU HAVE GOUT, YOUR KIDNEYS ARE AT RISK

**1 in 5** people with gout will develop kidney stones.

**Kidney stones** form when uric acid crystals deposit in the kidneys. They are very painful. If left untreated, kidney stones may block the urinary tract and can result in infection.

Kidney stones can also cause permanent scarring and damage to the kidneys. Over time, kidney stones and damage can lead to **chronic kidney disease**, which includes conditions that damage your kidneys and decrease their ability to keep you healthy. Untreated kidney disease can even lead to **kidney failure**, or loss of kidney function.

Gout and elevated uric acid levels have also been linked with other causes of **decreased kidney function** – making routine monitoring important.

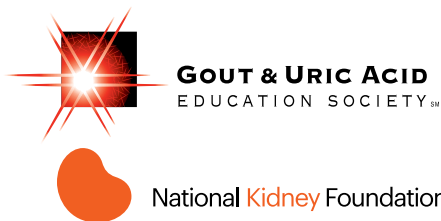


"Blausen gallery 2014". Wikiversity Journal of Medicine.



TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR TODAY  
TO REDUCE PAINFUL GOUT FLARES  
& PROTECT YOUR LONG-TERM  
KIDNEY HEALTH.

Learn more at:  
[GoutEducation.org](http://GoutEducation.org)  
[Kidney.org/atoz](http://Kidney.org/atoz)



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# GOUT & KIDNEY HEALTH





## GOUT AND HYPERURICEMIA

### WHAT IS GOUT?

Gout is an extremely painful and lifelong form of inflammatory arthritis caused by a buildup of uric acid crystals in the joints. Untreated, it can lead to permanent joint damage and destruction of tissue, as well as other serious health issues. Unfortunately, just **10 percent of people with gout are getting the ongoing treatment they need.**

### WHAT IS HYPERURICEMIA?

Uric acid is a normal waste product found in your blood. Uric acid typically dissolves in the blood and then passes through the kidneys, where it is eliminated through urine. If there is more uric acid than the kidneys can get rid of, a condition called **hyperuricemia** (high uric acid in the blood) develops. When uric acid builds up and forms crystals in the joints and other tissues, painful gout flares can occur.

### THE GOUT/KIDNEY CONNECTION

While those who have gout are more likely to get kidney disease, those who have kidney disease are also more likely to suffer from gout and elevated uric acid.

If you have kidney disease, it will be more difficult for your kidneys to get rid of uric acid – and high uric acid and gout may contribute to decreased kidney function and worse outcomes.

## CONTROL GOUT & PROTECT YOUR KIDNEYS

### TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

If you have gout, hyperuricemia or kidney disease, talk to your doctor to learn how you can protect your health and prevent long-term damage.

- **Know your numbers.** Routine blood tests can check to see if you have elevated uric acid and to measure your kidney function (glomerular filtration rate).
- **Take medications as directed.** Your doctor may prescribe medications to keep uric acid levels low and gout flares at bay. Medications must be taken as prescribed, and should not be stopped – even if levels improve – without consulting the doctor.
- **Drink plenty of water.** Drink at least eight cups of water a day to help flush the kidneys and remove uric acid from the bloodstream.
- **Avoid trigger foods.** Your doctor may ask that you stay away from high-purine foods (red meat, shellfish and alcohol) and those that contain high-fructose corn syrup (processed foods and soft drinks).
- **Make healthy lifestyle choices.** Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy body weight. Avoid smoking.
- **Control other health issues.** Obesity, high blood pressure, high lipid levels and diabetes can elevate uric acid – leading to gout flares and damaging the kidneys.
- **Tell your doctor what medications** and supplements you are taking. Some may be raising your uric acid level.

## GO FOR 6

Beyond kidney damage, excess uric acid has been linked to other serious health issues, including heart disease and diabetes.

If you have gout or kidney stones, maintaining a healthy serum uric acid level of **6 mg/dL or below** can reduce risk. Like other healthy benchmark numbers for blood pressure, heart rate, cholesterol and blood sugar, knowing your uric acid level is important, too.



**ASK YOUR DOCTOR FOR A ROUTINE SERUM URIC ACID BLOOD TEST, AND KNOW YOUR NUMBER.**

Visit **GoutEducation.org** to learn more about the Gout & Uric Acid Education Society's "Go for 6" campaign.

