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## **Gout & Uric Acid Education Society calls new guidelines on gout management an important milestone, publishes response for physicians and patients**

*Encourages gout patients to talk to their doctors about lifestyle, diet and treatment options*

**PITTSBURGH, October 31, 2012** – As the American College of Rheumatology prepares for its annual meeting in November, the Gout & Uric Acid Education Society has responded to recently published gout management guidelines with official messages to physicians and patients on [www.gouteducation.org](http://www.gouteducation.org) – calling the guidelines an important milestone that have the potential to improve the care of the 8.3 million gout sufferers in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

The American College of Rheumatology's (ACR) two-part "Guidelines for the Management of Gout," published in *Arthritis Care and Research*, emphasize the importance of patient education, specifically as it relates to diet, lifestyle choices, treatment objectives and the management of co-existing diseases. They also deal with the pharmacologic approach to lowering uric acid levels, and with therapy for the treatment and prevention of gout flares.

"The Gout and Uric Acid Education Society views the guidelines to be an important milestone, presenting excellent evidence-based support for what a standard approach to gout should be," said N. Lawrence Edwards, MD, Professor of Medicine, Rheumatology and Clinical Immunology, University of Florida, and Chairman and CEO of the Gout & Uric Acid Education Society. "While most of what is laid out in the guidelines has been a standard of care for some time, these standards are not widely adhered to. It is hoped that with the weight of having a set of guidelines generated in this country, that there will be a greater conformity to this standard of care."

Caused by an accumulation of [uric acid crystals](#) in body, [gout](#) is the most prevalent and painful form of inflammatory arthritis. Uric acid crystals can form in the joints when there are abnormally high levels of uric acid in the body.

As emphasized in the new ACR guidelines, gout patients are encouraged to consume a balanced diet of fresh fruit and vegetables, as well as low-fat dairy products. More importantly, they should limit their intake of high fructose corn syrup, table sugar, table salt, red meats, alcohol and shellfish. The

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<sup>1</sup> According to the most recent National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), 2007-2008

guidelines encourage patients to supplement a balanced diet by exercising, maintaining a healthy weight, staying hydrated and not smoking. In addition, patients are urged to communicate with their doctor about other health risks, their target uric acid level, treatment objectives and recommended steps to help manage the condition and help avoid flares.

“Those of us in the Gout & Uric Acid Education Society look forward to working with the ACR to determine how best to utilize information in these guidelines to work with primary care providers who still care for the great majority of people with gout,” said H. Ralph Schumacher, Jr., MD, Professor of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania. “We also look forward to further studies to clarify the many recommendations that depend only on expert opinion, and on studies to evaluate how best to disseminate this educational material so that it improves not only knowledge, but actual outcomes for our patients.”

Gout & Uric Acid Education Society has produced four informational videos that follow the American College of Rheumatology’s guidelines for the management of gout, focusing on [uric acid](#), [diet and lifestyle](#), and [medications](#). For more information about educational resources for patients and medical professionals, visit [www.gouteducation.org](http://www.gouteducation.org). The new information videos, as well free patient brochures and fliers, are available to download from the website.

#### **About the Gout & Uric Acid Education Society**

Formed in September 2005, the Gout & Uric Acid Education Society has a comprehensive patient education brochure, as well as a user-friendly website for patients, caregivers, family members and healthcare providers. For more information about gout and the Gout & Uric Acid Education Society, please visit. Follow [@GoutEducation](#) on Twitter or “like” [Gout Education](#) on Facebook.