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## **Gout & Uric Acid Education Society Teams up with Artist Shaun Boland to Raise Awareness of Gout Arthritis through Educational Cartoon Series**

*Cartoons designed to educate on severity of gout, dispel common myths and encourage proper diagnosis and treatment*

**PITTSBURGH, Feb. 25, 2014** – Gout is the most common form of inflammatory arthritis, with the number of Americans suffering from the disease increasing sevenfold over the past five decades. But while gout is very serious and extremely painful, it is widely misunderstood – and often unjustly poked fun at – by the general public.

To help raise awareness about the severity of gout and encourage proper diagnosis and treatment, the Gout & Uric Acid Education Society (GUAES) has teamed up with nationally published cartoonist, Shaun Boland, to introduce a series of educational cartoons.

“Gout arthritis in itself is no laughing matter. It is extremely painful and can even be debilitating, yet our research has shown that just one in five Americans thinks of gout as a ‘serious’ condition,” said N. Lawrence Edwards, M.D., Professor of Medicine, Rheumatology and Clinical Immunology, University of Florida, and Chairman and CEO of GUAES. “We hope that by taking this light-hearted approach, we can really raise awareness about gout arthritis and make a difference in how it is perceived by the public.”

To manage gout arthritis, GUAES encourages sufferers to work closely with their physicians to develop a treatment plan that involves a combination of the right medications with healthy diet and lifestyle changes. While gout can be better managed with these steps, unfortunately just 10 percent of gout sufferers are getting the ongoing treatment that they need.

“While there is a great need to alter the perception of gout among the general public, there is an even greater need to educate gout sufferers, themselves, about the importance of regular care – even when they’re not experiencing a gout attack,” added Dr. Edwards. “We hope that these cartoons will encourage more sufferers to take the critical steps of connecting with their doctors; getting their uric acid levels checked regularly; and getting the treatment they need to minimize the risk of future bouts of gout arthritis.”

## GUAES Cartoon Series – 2

Seven gout education cartoons were created to reinforce messages about pain and the need for treatment, dietary triggers and the long history of the disease that now needs greater attention. The cartoons are available through the GUAES website ([gouteducation.org](http://gouteducation.org)), and through the organization's Facebook ([Gout Education](https://www.facebook.com/GoutEducation)) and Twitter ([@GoutEducation](https://twitter.com/GoutEducation)) pages. Medical professionals and gout sufferers are encouraged to share the cartoons through their own social media efforts to help raise awareness about the growing incidence of this disease and *Take a Stand on Gout*.

For high-resolution versions of cartoons, or for additional information, please contact [info@gouteducation.org](mailto:info@gouteducation.org).

### About the Gout & Uric Acid Education Society

Formed in September 2005, the Gout & Uric Acid Education Society (GUAES) is a nonprofit organization of health care professionals dedicated to educating the public and health care community about gout arthritis, and the related health care consequences of hyperuricemia. With the aim of improving the quality of care and minimizing the burden of gout, GUAES offers complimentary resources for both the public and medical professionals at [gouteducation.org](http://gouteducation.org). Follow [@GoutEducation](https://twitter.com/GoutEducation) on Twitter and “like” [Gout Education](https://www.facebook.com/GoutEducation) on Facebook.

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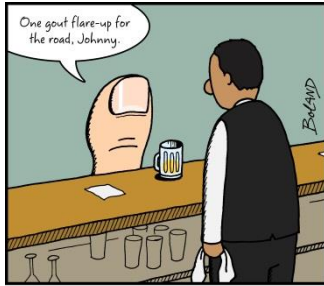


Gout arthritis is an extremely painful disease, yet just one in five Americans thinks of gout as a “serious” condition.



One of the founding fathers of the US & a major contributor to the understanding of electricity, Benjamin Franklin was a sufferer of gout. He was very vocal about his painful run-ins with the disease.

## GUAES Cartoon Series – 3



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Illustration by Bol's Eye Comics.

While gout arthritis can affect a number of joints, it most commonly affects the big toe. Consumption of alcoholic beverages – particularly beer – has been linked to gout flares.



Gambling with gout never pays. If you suspect you may have gout, talk to your medical professional today.

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Illustration by Bol's Eye Comics.

There are a number of factors that can contribute to gout attacks, including high uric acid levels greater than 6 mg/dL and consumption of alcohol.



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Illustrated by Bol's Eye Comics.

One of the most influential scientists of all time, Sir Isaac Newton is known for his work with the laws of motion & gravitation. As a gout sufferer, Newton understood the “gravity” of the disease.



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Illustrated by Bol's Eye Comics.

While gout typically affects men over the age of 40, risk factors ranging from family history to having other health issues mean gout can affect anyone at any time – even professional athletes.



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Illustrated by Bol's Eye Comics.

Does Santa Claus have gout arthritis? During the holiday season, those who have gout should be especially cautious to refrain from overindulging in decadent meals, treats and alcohol consumption.