

IF YOU HAVE GOUT, YOUR HEART HEALTH IS AT RISK

HAVING GOUT **DOUBLES** A PERSON'S RISK FOR HEART ATTACK OR STROKE.

Many heart health issues – including **high blood pressure, blocked arteries** and **heart failure** – have been associated with gout.

When left untreated, gout can be very dangerous – with new research showing that people with gout are significantly more likely to have a **heart attack** or **stroke**.

Risks may be higher among those who suffer from **obesity**, which is a shared risk factor for both gout and heart problems. However, research has also shown that **hyperuricemia** alone has been linked with a higher risk of death and other heart-related complications. Hyperuricemia – or high levels of uric acid in the blood – is the root cause of gout.

While gout and heart health issues can affect anyone, **women** with gout are 3.5 times more likely to have a heart attack as men.



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

Learn more at GoutEducation.org.



GOUT & HEART 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.

To avoid gout and other problems, **uric acid levels should be at 6 mg/dL or below**, and should be monitored regularly by your doctor.



CONTROL GOUT & PROTECT YOUR HEART HEALTH

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

If you have gout, high blood pressure or heart 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. It is also important to have your blood pressure and cholesterol checked regularly.
- **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. Tell your doctor all medications and supplements you are taking.
- **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. Staying hydrated is important for reducing gout flares and for improving heart health.
- **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 lipid levels, kidney disease and diabetes can elevate uric acid – leading to gout flares and potential heart health issues.



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

If you have gout or cardiovascular issues, maintaining a healthy serum uric acid level of 6 mg/dL or below is important to 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 Education Society's "Go for 6" campaign.

