

IF YOU HAVE GOUT,  
YOUR BONE & JOINT  
HEALTH IS AT RISK.

Just **10%** of people with gout get  
needed ongoing treatment – putting  
them at risk for serious health issues.

During a gout attack, a person experiences  
sudden and severe episodes of pain, warmth  
and swelling in one or more joints.

Without treatment, frequent gout attacks and  
elevated uric acid levels can cause large **tophi**,  
or deposits of crystals, to form in joints, bones,  
cartilage or under the skin. Tophi may lead to  
erosion of the bone and eventually joint damage  
and deformities that result in loss of normal use.

The best way to protect against permanent  
bone, joint and tissue damage from gout is to  
talk to the doctor – right at the first attack – to  
determine an ongoing treatment plan.



TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR TODAY  
TO REDUCE PAINFUL GOUT  
FLARES & PREVENT LONG-TERM  
BONE, JOINT & TISSUE DAMAGE

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



GOUT &  
BONE & JOINT  
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 BONE & JOINT HEALTH

### TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

If you have gout, talk to your doctor to learn how you can protect your health and prevent long-term bone, joint and tissue damage.

- **Know your numbers.** Routine blood tests can check to see if you have elevated uric acid. Your doctor may also order additional blood tests to check for other health issues.
- **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.
- **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

# GO FOR 6

Beyond increasing the risk for bone, joint and tissue damage, excess uric acid has been linked to other serious health issues, including kidney damage, heart disease and diabetes.

If you have gout, 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.

