



# TALKING WITH YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT GOUT



Gout is a chronic disease that requires lifelong care once diagnosed. It is important to discuss treatment and lifestyle modifications with your health care providers. There are ways to work with your health care professional to gain control of symptoms that will help keep flares under control. By managing the disease, you can avoid future flares and long-term joint damage. Here are some questions that you may want to ask at your next appointment:

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. Do I definitely have gout?
  - How was the diagnosis made?
2. How often should I get my uric acid level checked?
3. What is my uric acid level now?
4. What should my target uric acid level be?
5. Will I need to go on medication to lower my uric acid level?
  - What is the right medication for me?
  - What will the dosage be?
  - How many times a day will it be needed?
  - What do I do if I miss a dose?
  - What do I do if I accidentally take too much?
  - How long will I need to be on this medication?
  - Will there be any side effects when I start treatment? Are there any long-term side effects?
  - Are there any possible drug interactions with the other medications I am taking?
  - What happens when I reach my uric acid target?
6. What about medications for pain?
  - What is the right medication for me?
  - Are the pain medications over-the-counter or by prescription?
  - How much can I take and how often?
  - Are there any side effects?
  - What is the minimum amount I can take and still see results?
  - What if I am taking the maximum amount and I am still in pain?
  - Are there any possible drug interactions with the other medications I am taking?
7. Are there any changes or limitations to the foods I eat?
8. Are there any limitations to the beverages I drink?
9. Should I be exercising, and how often?
10. Do I need to lose weight?
11. What should I do when I have another flare?
12. What should I do if I have reached my target uric acid level, but am still having flares?

## QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED

1. When and where in your body did the intense pain start?
  - How long did the pain last?
  - Rate your pain on a scale from 1-10.
2. Have you had episodes of pain like this before?
  - If so when and where in the body?
3. Did anything you can recall happen that could have triggered the pain, such as trauma to the joint involved, or certain food or drink?
4. Are you aware of any history of gout among blood relatives?
5. How often do you drink alcohol? What kind and how much do you drink at a time?
6. How would you describe your current diet?
7. Do you currently exercise and, if so, how often?
8. Do you have any other medical conditions? Are you under medical care for them?
9. What medications do you take? (You may want to bring them to your appointment.)
10. Do you have any questions about your treatment or diagnosis that we have not discussed?

For more information, talk to your doctor or visit [GoutEducation.org](http://GoutEducation.org)

