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## As Gout Education Society marks 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gout Awareness Day, research reveals misconceptions, ongoing patient burden

### 93% of gout patients report life impacts as 59% of Americans misunderstand treatment, new study shows

**GAINESVILLE, Fla., May 21, 2026** – Despite widespread awareness that gout is a chronic disease, significant misunderstanding remains about how it should be treated and how serious it can become, according to new research commissioned by the Gout Education Society (GES) to recognize the 20th anniversary of Gout Awareness Day, May 22.

The national survey, conducted by Wakefield Research, found a striking disconnect: While 88% of Americans correctly identify gout as a chronic condition, many still hold outdated or incorrect beliefs about its management and long-term risks.

“After 20 years of Gout Awareness Day, we’ve made progress in recognition, but much more work is needed to improve understanding,” said N. Lawrence Edwards, MD, MACP, MACR, chairman of the Gout Education Society. “Gout is highly treatable, yet too many patients are relying on incomplete or incorrect information, which can lead to unnecessary pain, complications and long-term joint damage.”

### A persistent knowledge gap

Misconceptions about gout treatment remain widespread:

- 59% of Americans believe gout can be managed without daily medication if diet is controlled
- 55% believe gout only affects the feet and toes
- 41% think patients can stop treatment once symptoms subside

“When patients believe gout is temporary or manageable without long-term treatment, they are far less likely to take the steps needed to control the disease.”

### The hidden toll of gout

The findings reinforce that gout is far more than episodic pain: It has measurable impact on overall well-being:

- 35% of patients report reduced quality of life

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- 28% report depression related to gout
- 22% feel isolated
- 20% visited the emergency room in the past year due to symptoms

Overall, 93% of gout sufferers say the disease impacts their lives beyond physical symptoms, and many Americans say they witness missed work and social disruption among those they know with gout.

### Missed diagnoses, missed opportunities

The study also points to challenges in diagnosis and care:

- 42% of patients were initially misdiagnosed
- Nearly 1 in 5 waits more than a year for an accurate diagnosis

Management gaps persist after diagnosis:

- While 98% of patients report taking action to manage their gout, only 40% know their uric acid levels, a clinical marker.
- 63% of gout sufferers believe they can avoid daily medication by following a healthy diet.

### A renewed call to action

As Gout Awareness Day marks its 20<sup>th</sup> year, GES urges anyone experiencing symptoms, or who suspects they may have gout, to visit a healthcare provider and discuss their symptoms and risk factors. Early diagnosis and ongoing management are critical to effectively managing this chronic disease. Free educational resources, including tools to help patients prepare for conversations with their healthcare providers, are available at [GoutEducation.org](https://GoutEducation.org).

### About the Survey

The 2026 GES Gout Survey was conducted by Wakefield Research among 1,000 nationally representative U.S. adults ages 18+, including an oversample of 250 U.S. adults who have been treated for gout, between April 22 and April 30, 2026.

### About the Gout Education Society

The Gout Education Society (formerly The Gout & Uric Acid Education Society) is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization formed in September 2005 by rheumatologists. The Gout Education Society is dedicated to educating the public and health care community about gout—the most common form of inflammatory arthritis—and helping to improve overall patient care.

Website: [GoutEducation.org](https://GoutEducation.org)      Facebook: [Gout Education](https://GoutEducation.org)      X: [@GoutEducation](https://GoutEducation.org)

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