

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR

GOUT



A practical guide to treatments,
services and lifestyle choices

How can this booklet help you?

This booklet is designed for people who have gout.

It will help you understand your condition so that you can better manage your symptoms and continue to lead an active and healthy life. This booklet offers information and practical advice to help you:

- understand what gout is and what it means for you
- understand how medicines can help treat gout flares and prevent future flares
- work with your healthcare team to manage the disease in the short and long term
- make healthy choices for your general health and wellbeing
- find support and additional information to cope with the impact of gout.

The information inside is based on the latest research and recommendations, and has been reviewed by Australian experts in the field of arthritis to make sure it is current and relevant to your needs.

So go ahead —
take control of your gout!

© Copyright Arthritis Australia 2014.
Reviewed October 2019.

**Supported by: educational grant from:
Menarini Australia Pty Ltd
ABN 116 935 758
Level 8, 67 Albert Avenue,
Chatswood NSW 2067**



CONTENTS

UNDERSTANDING GOUT	4
TREATING GOUT	10
DIET AND LIFESTYLE	16
WHO CAN HELP?	21
WORKING WITH YOUR GP	22
SEEING A RHEUMATOLOGIST	23
OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS	24
SEEKING SUPPORT	26
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	28
USEFUL RESOURCES	29

MEDICAL AND CONSUMER CONSULTANTS

Wendy Favorito,
Arthritis Australia Consumer
Director and Board Member

Assoc Prof Neil McGill,
Rheumatologist

Assoc Prof Julian McNeil
Rheumatologist and Chair of
Australian Rheumatology Association
Therapeutics Committee

Prof Susanna Proudman,
Rheumatologist and Medical
Director, Arthritis Australia

Assoc Prof Philip Robinson
Rheumatologist

Assoc Prof Peter Youssef,
Rheumatologist and Chair of
Arthritis Australia Scientific Advisory
Committee



Understanding gout

What is gout?

Gout is a painful form of arthritis caused by crystals that form in and around the joints. The crystals result from high levels of urate in the body. In gout, the body does not flush out the crystals fast enough.

What is urate?

Urate is found in all people, in small amounts in our blood. Our bodies make urate every day by breaking down natural substances called purines. Purines are found in our bodies' cells, as well as some of the foods we eat.

Our kidneys usually remove any excess urate from our blood into our urine. However, people with gout have higher-than-normal amounts of urate in their bodies. This can be a result of:

- our bodies producing too much urate and/or
- the kidneys being unable to get rid of it quickly enough (this is the main reason for high urate levels in more than nine out of ten people with gout).

MYTH Gout was thought of as the 'disease of kings', the result of overeating and drinking too much alcohol. In fact, gout can affect anyone regardless of what you eat or drink.

If urate levels remain high, small, needle-like urate crystals start forming in and around the joints (See figure 1 on page 5). These crystals form slowly, over months or even years, usually without any symptoms. A gout flare occurs when the body's immune system flares the crystals. The crystals still remain in the joint(s) after the gout flare settles.

What are the symptoms of gout?

Generally, the first symptom of gout is severe pain from a gout flare. Urate levels can be high for months or even years, without any symptoms, before a gout flare occurs. A flare of gout usually comes on very quickly, over just a few hours, and often overnight. The affected joint(s) becomes inflamed, causing intense pain, redness, heat and swelling. Often the joint is extremely sore to touch – even

Understanding gout

just the light pressure of the bed sheets can be excruciating. It can be extremely painful to walk or move the joint. Without treatment, a gout flare usually lasts about one week.

Gout commonly affects the big toe, although other joints can be affected, including the ankles, knees, hands, wrists and elbows.

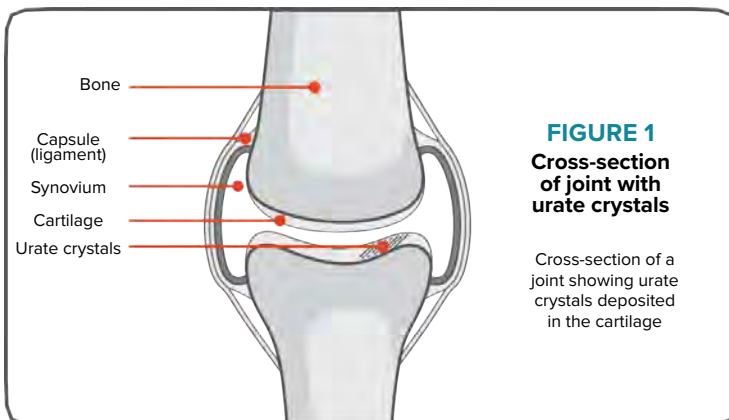
Urate crystals can also collect outside of the joints. They form small, solid, white, painless lumps under the skin called tophi (See figures 2 and 3 on page 6 and 7). The most common places for tophi to form are on the tops of the toes, back of the heels, ears, backs of the fingers and hands, backs of the knees and around the elbows.

What causes gout?

Gout occurs in people with higher-than-normal levels of urate in their body. Some people with gout may produce too much urate.

Most of the time it's caused by the kidneys being unable to get rid of excess urate. Some of the known risk factors for having high urate levels include:

- Genetic factors: High urate levels can run in families and is one of the most common causes of gout



Understanding gout

- Being overweight or obese
 - Having high cholesterol, high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes or glucose intolerance
 - Having kidney disease
 - Taking certain medications, such as diuretics (“water tablets”), can affect the kidneys’ ability to get rid of urate.
 - Drinking too much alcohol may increase urate production and reduce how much is passed out in urine. Gout flares seem to be more common in beer and spirits drinkers than in people who drink wine. Beer and spirits are now thought to increase the risk of incidence of gout, whilst wine does not.
 - Consuming large amounts of fructose, a type of sugar, can increase urate levels in the blood. It is found in high levels in soft drinks sweetened with corn syrup processed foods and fruit juices.
- You can have high urate levels without having gout flares. However, several factors seem to increase the risk of gout flares including:



Photography used with kind permission of Elsevier. © Elsevier 2011. Taken from Rheumatology, fifth edition.

Edited by Marc C Hochberg, Alan J Silman, Josef S Smolen, Michael E Weinblatt and Michael H Weisman. Graphics used with kind permission of Versus Arthritis UK.

Understanding gout

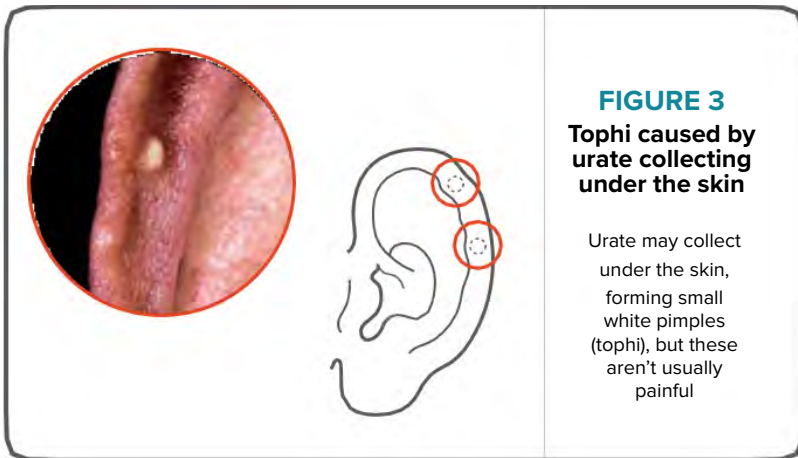
- Consuming large amounts of fructose, a type of sugar, can increase urate levels in the blood. It is found in high levels in soft drinks sweetened with corn syrup processed foods and fruit juices.
- Dehydration (not drinking enough water)
- Fever (high temperature)
- ‘Crash diets’ or fasting
- Having an operation
- Injury or trauma to the joint.

Who is affected by gout?

Anyone can get gout. However, gout in women before menopause is rare and your doctor may wish to further investigate other causes for your symptoms.

Can gout cause long-term problems?

Once a gout flare settles, your joints may feel normal again. However, the urate crystals still remain in your joint(s).



Photography used with kind permission of Elsevier. © Elsevier 2011. Taken from Rheumatology, fifth edition. Edited by Marc C Hochberg, Alan J Silman, Josef S Smolen, Michael E Weinblatt and Michael H Weisman.

Graphics used with kind permission of Versus Arthritis UK.

Understanding gout

Another flare may not happen for months or even years. The first few flares of gout may not cause any permanent damage to the joint(s). However if gout is not managed well and urate levels remain higher-than-normal:

- The time between flares may get shorter, the flares may become more severe and more joints may be affected
- Tophi (solid lumps of urate crystals) can form, especially on the toes, ears, fingers, hands, forearms, knees, and elbows (Refer figures 2 and 3 on pages 6 and 7)
- Permanent damage can occur to the cartilage and bone due to the formation of tophi inside the joint. This can lead to constant joint pain and inflammation, similar to osteoarthritis
- Increased risk of kidney stones and other health conditions.

The good news is, that although gout is very painful, it is extremely treatable for most people. Early diagnosis and the right treatment are crucial in preventing long-term complications from gout.

How will my doctor diagnose gout?

Many people with gout do not receive the right treatment because they have not been diagnosed properly in the first place.

The only way to diagnose gout with certainty is by your doctor looking at samples of your **joint fluid** under a microscope. A needle is used to draw a small amount of fluid from one of your affected joints. This fluid is then examined under a microscope to see whether urate crystals are present. If the crystals are present, your doctor can confirm that you have gout. If there are no crystals in your joint fluid, your doctor will consider other causes for your symptoms, such as an infection in the joint.

A **blood test** can measure the amount of urate in your blood. If urate levels are higher than normal, this can help support a diagnosis of gout. However blood tests can sometimes show normal urate levels, even during a flare. Blood tests are most useful for working out if your symptoms are due to other conditions, or to monitor your urate levels once you have started treatment for gout.

Understanding gout

Your doctor may suggest an x-ray, however, x-rays are often normal in the early stages of gout so are not very useful in diagnosing gout. They may show signs of joint damage if your gout has not been well managed.

Top tip: Be certain it's gout



Treating gout

There are two main parts to treating gout:

1. Treatment of the gout flare
2. Treatment to lower urate levels and prevent future gout flares.

Treating a gout flare

There are several medicines that can help reduce the pain and inflammation of a gout flare:

- **Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs):** These medicines reduce pain and inflammation in the joints. Some NSAIDs can be bought over-the-counter while others are only available with a prescription. Like all medicines, NSAIDs can cause side effects so it is important to get advice from your doctor before taking them. Your doctor will recommend the lowest dose for the shortest period of time to reduce your risk of developing side effects
- **Corticosteroid injections or tablets:** This type of medicine is also very effective in reducing gout pain and inflammation. Corticosteroids can be given as a tablet or as an injection (needle) into a joint or muscle. Corticosteroids are usually given only for a few days as a treatment for gout and so do not normally cause any of the serious side effects that can occur with long-term use of these medicines
- **Colchicine:** This medicine helps to reduce pain and swelling during gout flares, particularly if NSAIDs cannot be used for safety reasons. Side effects, such as nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea, are common so your doctor will usually recommend low dosages of this medicine. This typically involves 1mg (milligram) initially, 0.5mg one hour later and then no further colchicine for 24 hours. Seek advice from your doctor if you experience any side effects, as he/she may alter the dose or prescribe a different medicine.

Treating gout

Treating a gout flare as soon as you first notice signs of an flare can help reduce the length and severity of the flare. Work with your doctor to find the right treatment for you and have a supply readily available so you can start treatment as early as possible if an flare occurs.

Applying ice or cold packs to the painful joint for ten to fifteen minutes at a time, may also help reduce pain. During a gout flare, you may need to protect the affected joint. For example, if your big toe is affected you may need to limit the amount of walking and standing you do, avoid certain types of shoes, and create a

bed cradle to keep the bed sheets off your foot when sleeping.

Treatments to lower urate levels and prevent flares

There are several medicines that lower urate levels in the blood to prevent future gout flares. Your doctor may suggest taking these medicines if you are having frequent gout flares, your blood tests show high levels of urate, or you develop tophi, kidney stones or signs of permanent joint damage.



These medicines need to be taken every day, even if you are not having a gout flare. They can be very effective in lowering your urate level and controlling gout, if: You continue taking the medicine.

Your doctor may recommend you take the medicine forever

- You do not miss doses
- You take the full, correct dose.

Each of these types of medicines work in slightly different ways and can produce varying side effects.

Examples of these medicines include:

- **Allopurinol**, which decreases the body's production of urate
- **Febuxostat**, which also decreases the production of urate
- **Probenicid**, which increases the kidneys' ability to remove urate into the urine
- Other medicines may also be available through specialist doctors if your urate levels are not controlled with the medicines above.

When first taking these medicines, your doctor will monitor your urate levels to work out the right dose for you. It may take several months of gradually increasing the dose to find the right amount. Taking sudden, high doses of these medicines can actually cause a gout flare. Your doctor will try bringing your urate levels down slowly, by starting with a low dose of these medicines and gradually increasing the dose, as this method is much less likely to trigger an flare and can reduce the risk of side effects. Your doctor may also suggest taking other medicines, such as a very low dose of colchicine, to protect against a gout flare during the first few months of starting these medicines. Continue taking these medicines even during a gout flare.

Top tip: Ask your doctor about medicines to lower your urate levels for long- term gout management

Know your target urate level

The goal of treatments for gout is to lower urate levels to a level that prevents gout flares and other long-term problems. Your urate levels can be checked with a blood test. For most people with gout, the target urate level (serum urate) level you are aiming to achieve is

Less than 0.36 millimoles per litre (<0.36mmol/L)

For some people with tophi (hard lumps of urate crystals), joint damage on x-ray and/or symptoms that persist between flares, the target urate level will be less than 0.30 millimoles per litre (<0.30mmol/L).

What side effects do gout medicines have?

To understand more about your medicines and any risks or side effects that they may have, read the Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) leaflet that is available from your doctor or pharmacist. CMI leaflets provide easy to understand information including what the medicine is for and how it is used; things to consider before using the medicine; possible side effects and what to do if they occur.

Speak to your GP or specialist doctor, especially if you have concerns about the long-term effect of medicines.

The Australian Rheumatology Association and Arthritis Australia have excellent information sheets about medicines used to treat and prevent gout.



Call the National Arthritis Infoline on T: 1800 011 041 for copies or visit www.rheumatology.org.au or www.arthritisaustralia.com.au

Can natural or alternative therapies help?

There are many promises made for non-medical ‘cures’ or treatments to ease gout – but there’s very little proof that any of these work and further research is needed. For example, there is very little evidence that supplements such as celery seed or garlic are helpful in reducing the symptoms of gout.

Because herbal, homeopathic, ayurvedic or Chinese medicines may affect the treatments prescribed by your doctor, please talk to your GP and specialist about other treatments you are thinking about using.

You may feel concerned that your doctor or other members of your healthcare team will disapprove of complementary therapies. However, it is very important to keep your healthcare team informed, even if they do not approve. Your healthcare team, particularly your doctor and pharmacist, can’t give you the best professional advice without knowing all the treatments you are using. This includes vitamin supplements, herbal medicines and other therapies.

See Arthritis Australia’s Complementary therapies information sheet for more about the safe use of these types of treatments at www.arthritisaustralia.com.au

Diet and lifestyle



There are many myths and claims about diets and other lifestyle changes to prevent gout. Research has shown certain factors are more common in people with gout. For example, people with gout may tend to eat similar types of foods or drinks. However it hasn't been proven that any of these factors actually cause someone to develop gout. Although there is little scientific proof about the usefulness of many of these lifestyle changes to prevent gout, there can be definite benefits for your general health and wellbeing.

Purine-rich diet

Several studies have shown diet may be a contributor to the onset of gout, especially purine-rich foods.

Some of the purine-rich foods commonly linked to gout flares include:

- meat – particularly red meat and offal, such as liver, kidneys and heart
- seafood – particularly shellfish, scallops, mussels, herring, mackerel, sardines and anchovies
- foods containing yeast – such as Vegemite™ and beer.



These foods are often reported to trigger gout flares as purines are broken down into urate by our bodies. However, there is very little good quality, scientific evidence to show that eating these particular foods will cause gout. Additionally, there is little proof that avoiding these foods can reduce gout flares. In fact, research shows that not all foods rich in purine are linked to gout.

For example, a number of vegetables (asparagus, mushrooms, cauliflower and spinach) are rich in purines but do not appear to trigger gout flares. Dairy foods (which can contain purines) actually appear to lower our risk of gout.

Completely cutting purine-rich foods from your diet may cause you to miss out on important nutrients and vitamins.

For most people with gout, a healthy balanced diet is the best way to manage gout, alongside medicines to reduce urate levels.

If you notice certain foods trigger flares of gout, try eating less of those particular foods. Most people taking medicines to reduce urate levels find they can still eat purine-rich foods without flares of gout by being careful with the amount they eat.

Fructose

Fructose is a sugar that is found naturally in fruits and vegetables. High fructose corn syrup - a mixture of glucose and fructose - is often used as a sweetener in food products such as bread, cereal and soft drinks. An American study found that men who drank five to six servings of fructose-sweetened soft drinks per week were more likely to have gout. However, there is no research showing that fructose actually causes gout or that other fructose-rich foods can be linked to gout. Eating less foods artificially sweetened with high fructose corn syrup will be beneficial for your overall health. Fruit and vegetables

provide general health benefits and should not be completely avoided without advice from your doctor or dietitian.



Weight loss

An obese person is four times more likely to develop gout than someone with a healthy body weight. If you are overweight, gradual weight loss can help lower urate levels and reduce the risk of gout flares. However, it is important to avoid fasting or ‘crash’ dieting, where you go without adequate food for long periods and lose weight rapidly.

This type of dieting can actually increase urate levels and trigger a gout flare. A combination of balanced healthy eating and regular physical activity is the best way to lose weight. The Australian Government provides advice about the amount and kinds of foods that we need to eat for health and wellbeing including Australian Dietary Guidelines at www.eatforhealth.gov.au. For help with weight loss, you can ask your GP to refer you to an Accredited Practising Dietitian or find one directly via the Dietitians Association of Australia - call 1800 812 942 or visit www.daa.asn.au

Alcohol

Drinking large amounts of alcohol may increase your risk of a gout flare. Alcohol reduces the ability of the kidneys to remove urate from the blood. Some types of alcohol, such as beer, are rich in purines, which can also lead to increased urate levels. However, many people with gout can avoid gout flares without completely cutting out alcohol. Try reducing the amount of alcohol you drink and avoid binge drinking (drinking a lot of alcohol at one time). Gout flares are more common in beer and spirits drinkers than in people who drink wine.

However there is no scientific proof that only these types of alcoholic drinks lead to gout flares.

Talk to your doctor for advice about your alcohol intake or see www.health.gov.au (Health Topic: Alcohol) for Australian Government Guidelines on recommended alcohol intake.

Other healthy lifestyle choices

- **Drink enough water:** Dehydration (not drinking enough water) may be a risk factor for gout although this is not well proven in research. Drinking 1 – 1.5 litres of fluids a day is recommended for general health benefits. If you are taking diuretics (also known as ‘water pills’ or tablets which help the body get rid of water) or have heart or kidney problems, follow your doctor’s advice about how much water you should be drinking.
- **Vitamin C:** Vitamin C appears to reduce the risk of developing gout although it does not seem to reduce urate levels in people already with gout. Make sure you eat a healthy balanced diet with lots of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- **Stay active** and try to be physically active for at least 30 minutes a day, most days of the week.
- **Quit smoking.** For more information and advice on quitting smoking, contact the Quitline on 13 78 48, or visit the Department of Health www.health.gov.au (Health Topics: Smoking)

Top tip: A healthy diet and lifestyle can help you manage your gout



Who can help?

The good news is that gout can be effectively managed - and a team approach is the best way to combat it. This involves you and your healthcare professionals together with support from family, friends and community organisations.

How can you help?

Remember, you are the most important member of your healthcare team. By understanding your condition and how to stay on top of it, you can carry on living a normal life.

Work closely with your healthcare team to develop a management plan for your gout. This will include medicines to treat a gout flare and possibly medicines to lower urate levels. This will help you be actively involved in your care and decision-making about treatments. With the right treatment, gout doesn't have to get in the way of working, travelling, relationships, hobbies and leisure activities.

Understand how your treatments will help and how to get the most out of them. Your healthcare team can address your concerns and provide practical advice. Contact your State/Territory Arthritis Office on 1800 011 041. They can provide information and introduce you to support groups, exercise programs and other arthritis management services. See Arthritis Australia's range of information sheets at www.arthritisaustralia.com.au

Working with your GP

How can my GP help?

Your GP is an important partner in managing your gout. They can also help you to access other specialists, health professionals and services. Your GP will most likely make the initial diagnosis of gout and may refer you to a rheumatologist (arthritis specialist) if required.

Once your gout is fully assessed, your GP or specialist may prepare a care plan to manage the services and treatments you require. They will prescribe medicines and other lifestyle changes to improve your symptoms and will also see you regularly to monitor your urate levels and check your treatment is still keeping your levels to the target level.

Your GP may employ a practice nurse to coordinate your care and access to services.

How do I find a GP?

If you don't have a regular GP, find one who can support you. Speak to your local practice or medical centre.

When should I see my GP?

- You should visit your GP when you have your first gout flare. Your GP can prescribe the right medicines to treat the initial gout attack and advise about medicines that lower urate levels to prevent future flares.
- Your GP should also regularly monitor your urate levels to make sure they are staying below the target levels described on page 13. This may take several visits when you are first taking medicines to lower your urate levels and then may require a blood test every six months.
- Visit your GP immediately if you notice your gout flares are becoming more severe, more frequent or affecting more joints.

Top tip: Work with your doctor to develop a management plan for your gout

Seeing a rheumatologist

How can a rheumatologist help?

Rheumatologists are doctors who specialise in problems of the joints such as gout. Your GP may refer you to a rheumatologist if:

- it is unclear whether you have gout or if your symptoms are caused by another condition
- your gout flares are not prevented with medicines to lower your urate levels or are becoming more severe
- you require an injection into your joint
- you and your GP wish to seek advice about newer treatments.
- While your GP may have prescribed some medicines to treat and prevent gout flares, the rheumatologist might also recommend other medications to control your symptoms.

How do I find a rheumatologist?

- Your GP may recommend a rheumatologist
- You will need a referral from your GP to see a rheumatologist - they will then stay in touch to coordinate your care
- You can also contact the Australian Rheumatology Association on (02) 9252 2356 or visit www.rheumatology.org.au to find a rheumatologist (but you will still need a referral from your GP).

When should I see my rheumatologist?

- Your rheumatologist may initially want to see you every few weeks to work out how well your urate levels are responding to treatment
- Once the treatment is working well to control your gout, you may only need to return to the rheumatologist if your gout flares or other symptoms start to worsen.

Other health professionals

Your GP or rheumatologist may also refer you to other therapists for further advice.

How can other health professionals help?

A **dietitian** can give you tailored advice about weight loss, if you are overweight, and provide advice about a healthy, balanced diet to improve your general wellbeing.

A **physiotherapist** (physio) can show you exercises to do at home to strengthen and stretch the muscles in your joints and improve your function. They will also show you pain relief techniques to use at home, including the use of heat packs and walking sticks, to keep your joints as flexible and pain-free as possible.

An **exercise physiologist** can give you advice about exercise, including how to get started safely and the best type of exercise for your health and ability. If you need to lose weight, they can also design an exercise program to work alongside a healthy diet.

A **podiatrist** can help take care of your feet, perhaps by providing shoe

inserts or advice on footwear to reduce pain in your toes and/or feet. See the section on **Seeking support** on page 26 for information on health professionals who can help you to cope with the emotions you may be feeling.

A **pharmacist** can give you information about your medicines, side effects and interactions, as well as helping you to manage your medicines (eg. checking dosage, managing repeats).

How do I find a health professional?

- Your GP or rheumatologist can provide a referral, or you can contact a private therapist directly (see Useful resources on page 29).
- If your GP refers you to a health professional as part of a care plan, you may be able to have five sessions per year funded by Medicare. Ask your GP for more information.
- Most health professionals are available in the public health system (such as at a community health centre or public hospital). There is often a waiting list and you

Other health professionals

will usually need a referral from your GP. Their services are usually free or low cost.

When should I see a health professional?

- You may be referred to one or more therapists soon after your diagnosis of gout by your GP or rheumatologist.
- Ask your GP or rheumatologist about seeing a health professional if you notice your physical condition or abilities change.



Seeking support

Why me?

It's perfectly normal to wonder why you have developed gout and to feel angry, worried, frightened or confused about it. By taking control of your gout and working with your healthcare team, you can approach the disease with a positive attitude. However, sometimes the condition can get you down, especially if repeated gout flares are affecting your everyday life. It may also feel as though people around you, even close friends or family, don't understand what you're going through.

Who can help?

There are many people who can help you deal with the emotional side of gout. Your first step is to try to talk honestly with your partner, parents or children about how you feel. Give them a chance to talk too – they might have worries or feel that they don't know enough about your disease and how it is affecting you. Visit your GP if you are worried that unwanted feelings are too strong or have been there for a long time. Your GP may be able to suggest ways of

coping, or may prescribe medicines if you are especially worried or depressed. They may also refer you to a counsellor or **psychologist**, who can talk to you about your worries, feelings and moods, then suggest practical ways to work through them. If you want to contact a psychologist directly, call the Australian Psychological Society on 1800 333 497 or visit www.psychology.org.au beyondblue provides information and advice about depression, anxiety, available treatments and where to get help. Visit www.beyondblue.org.au or call 1300 22 4636.

Lifeline provides a 24hr confidential telephone crisis support service for anyone across Australia experiencing a personal crisis. Call 13 11 14.

What about information from websites?

The web can be a useful source of information and support. However, not everyone who puts information on the web is a qualified health practitioner.

Seeking support

Some organisations make unrealistic promises in order to sell their products. Treatment options and practices from overseas may also not be relevant or approved in Australia. Always check information from the web with a trusted member of your healthcare team.

The Australian Government's Healthdirect www.healthdirect.gov.au is an excellent starting point for web searches, as every site that Healthdirect links to has been checked for quality and accuracy of information.



Glossary of terms

Arthritis *are-thry-tiss*

A name for over 100 different conditions that affect the joints.

Corticosteroid *core-tick-o-ster-oyd*

A type of medicine that is very effective in reducing inflammation in the joints.

Dietitian *die-et-ish-un*

A health professional who can help you with a healthy diet and weight loss.

Inflammation *in-fla-may-shun*

The body's response to damage or infection. Inflammation can cause pain, swelling, warmth, redness and difficulty moving the joint.

NSAIDs *en-sayds*

A group of medicines known as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. These can reduce inflammation and pain.

Purines *pyu-reens*

Natural substances found in the body's cells and many different foods.

Rheumatologist *roo-ma-tol-o-jist*

A doctor who is a specialist in treating problems of the joints such as gout.

Tophi *toe-fi*

Hard lumps of urate crystals that form beneath the skin on the ears, fingers, hands, forearms, knees, and elbows.

Uric acid *you-rick a-sid*

A normal waste product found in the blood. It is made as our bodies break down substances called purines.

Urate *you-rayt*

Urate is another name for Uric Acid. A normal waste product found in the blood. It is made as our bodies break down substances called purines.

Useful resources

Australian resources

For access to quality online information about gout, start at Healthdirect

www.healthdirect.gov.au

For advice on healthy eating and appropriate exercise, visit the Department of Health

www.health.gov.au

To find a specialist, contact the Australian Rheumatology Association

www.rheumatology.org.au

Ph: (02) 9252 2356

To find a physiotherapist, contact the Australian Physiotherapy Association

<https://www.choose.physio>

To find a podiatrist, contact the Australian Podiatry Association

<https://www.podiatry.org.au>

Ph: (03) 9416 3111

To find an exercise physiologist, contact Exercise and Sports Science

Australia www.essa.org.au

Ph: (07) 3171 3335

To find a dietitian, contact the Dietitians Association of Australia

www.daa.asn.au

Ph: 1800 812 942

To find a psychologist, contact the Australian Psychological Society

www.psychology.org.au

Ph: 1800 333 497

International resources

The patient area on the website of the American College of

Rheumatology contains many useful resources **<https://www.rheumatology.org/I-Am-A/Patient-Caregiver>**

Caregiver

The Gout and Uric Acid Education Society (US) has information for both medical professionals and people with gout at **www.gouteducation.org**

Versus Arthritis (UK) also provides high quality information for people with gout **www.versus.org**

Please keep in mind that some issues and treatments from overseas may not be relevant in Australia.

My contact details

My name:

Telephone:

My GP:

Name:

Telephone:

My specialist:

Name:

Telephone:

My support team:

Name:

Telephone:

Name:

Telephone:

My medicines

Name	Dosage	Instructions

ARTHRITIS AUSTRALIA

Arthritis Australia is a not-for-profit organisation that provides support and information for all Australians affected by arthritis.

Contact your State/Territory Arthritis Office to find out about the range of awareness and education programs, support services and resources available.



i

ARTHRITIS ACT

Building 18, 170 Haydon Drive
Bruce ACT 2617
PO Box 908 Belconnen ACT 2616

ARTHRITIS NEW SOUTH WALES

Suite 1, 15/32 Delhi Road
North Ryde NSW 2113
Locked Bag 2216 North Ryde NSW 1670

ARTHRITIS NORTHERN TERRITORY

Shop 18, Rapid Creek Business Village
48 Trower Road, Millner NT 0810
PO Box 452 Nightcliff NT 0814

ARTHRITIS QUEENSLAND

Level 1, 42 Costin Street
Fortitude Valley, QLD 4006
PO Box 2121 Windsor QLD 4030

ARTHRITIS SOUTH AUSTRALIA

111A Welland Avenue
Welland SA 5007

ARTHRITIS TASMANIA

19A Main Road, Moonah TAS 7009
PO Box 780 Moonah TAS 7009

ARTHRITIS WESTERN AUSTRALIA

17 Lemnos Street
Shenton Park WA 6008
PO Box 34 Wembley WA 6913



ARTHRITIS AUSTRALIA

Level 2, 255 Broadway
Glebe NSW 2037
PO Box 550 Broadway NSW 2007
Phone: 02 9518 4441
Fax: 02 9518 4011
Email: info@arthritisaustralia.com.au

ISBN: 978-0-9805024-0-4

Arthritis Infoline: 1800 011 041 www.arthritisaustralia.com.au