


Deciding how to manage your gout


Name: _____
Date: _____

This resource is for people with gout not on regular gout medicine. It can help you talk with people you trust, like your doctor or a family member, about the choices available for managing gout.




WHAT IS GOUT?

- Gout is a type of arthritis caused by too much **uric acid** in your blood (also known as serum urate concentration).
- If levels stay high, urate **crystals** can form. Crystals in your joints cause swelling and pain.
- Over time crystals can build up and form lumps called **tophi**.






WHY DO YOU HAVE GOUT?

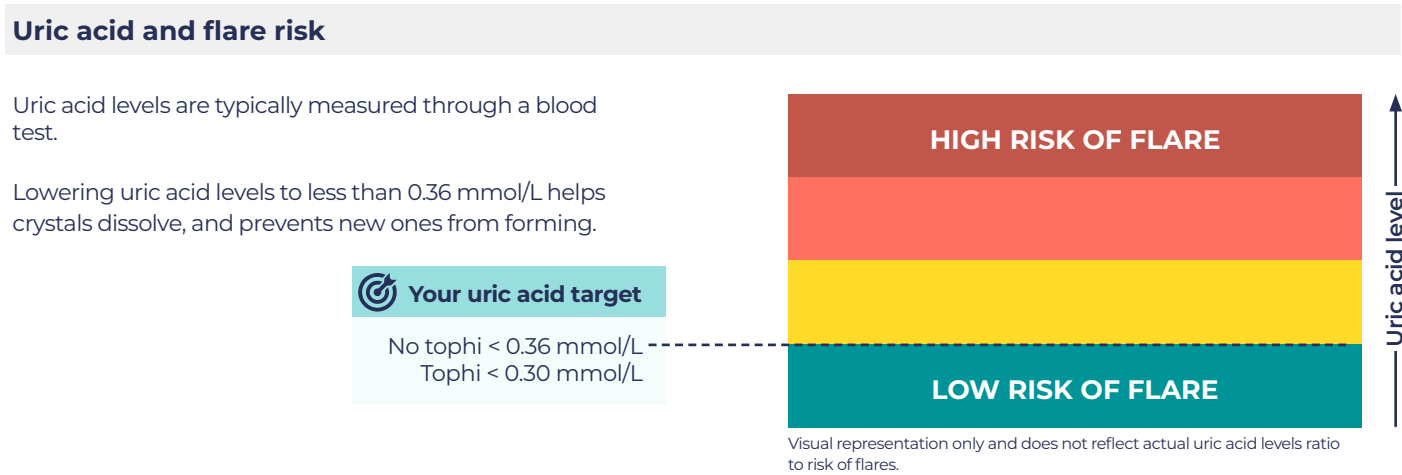
- Gout is not your fault.**
- The main cause of gout is genetics (family history).
- Reduced kidney function, excess body weight and some medicines can also contribute.
- [Some foods and drinks](#) (e.g. alcohol) can increase uric acid levels and trigger gout flares (attacks).



CAN GOUT BE CURED?

- Gout is a long-term condition and it can be completely controlled with medicines.
- To control gout you need to lower your uric acid level and keep it low. Your doctor will set a target level.
- Uncontrolled gout can cause painful flares and damage to your joints and kidneys.

Different actions and what they mean for your condition		
 <p>Take urate-lowering therapy (allopurinol or febuxostat) every day</p>	 <p>Follow a healthy lifestyle (balanced diet, physical activity and weight control)</p>	 <p>Treat each flare when it happens. No action to change uric acid levels</p>
WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM EACH CHOICE?		
Very effective at lowering uric acid levels. Helps crystals in your joints disappear with time. Tophi will eventually get smaller and disappear after target uric acid level is reached.	May help lower uric acid levels a little. Uric acid levels may stay high.	No effect on uric acid levels. High uric acid levels can lead to tophi, joint damage and kidney problems.
It can take many months to reach target uric acid level (you may still have flares during this time). Treatment is long-term.	May help reduce the risk of gout flares.	Will need to repeat treatment for each flare. Medicines used to treat pain and swelling do not stop gout from coming back.
Low risk of flares once your uric acid level falls and stays below target.	Repeat gout flares can happen more often and can become more severe. Every flare increases the risk of damage to your joints and may affect heart health.	



Information to discuss with your health professional

Do you have:

- ☐ Tophi
- ☐ Joint damage
- ☐ Two or more gout flares per year
- ☐ High uric acid level and kidney disease
- ☐ Kidney stones and kidney disease

If you have any of these, it is very important that you start urate-lowering therapy.

Lifestyle changes alone will not be enough to manage your gout and other complications.

Do you already follow a healthy lifestyle?

How much change can you realistically make?

Do you take other medicines regularly?

How might medicines for gout or gout flares affect your other medicines?

What matters most about how you manage your health?

Tick the box that best describes how you feel

Agree Disagree Don't know

I don't want to risk joint damage and kidney disease

☐ ☐ ☐

I don't want to risk having another gout flare

☐ ☐ ☐

I don't have time to keep coming back to my GP

☐ ☐ ☐

I think I can take care of my gout without medicines

☐ ☐ ☐

I worry about side effects from my medicines

☐ ☐ ☐

I am not prepared to take medicines every day

☐ ☐ ☐

Write down other questions you still have about gout and your health:

My decision (choose one or more options)

☐ Take urate-lowering therapy (allopurinol or febuxostat) every day

[My Gout Plan](#)



☐ Follow a healthy lifestyle

Follow up appointment in 6 months or after next flare if sooner

☐ Treat each flare when it happens

More information

[Your medicines](#)



[What is gout?](#)



[Gout and diet](#)



My next medical appointment

Health professional: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

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