

Our highly skilled podiatrists

are registered with the Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC) and members of the College of Podiatrists. The practice is accredited by the College of Podiatrists (CoP).

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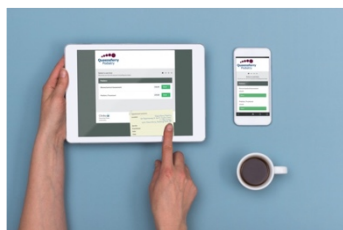
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Gout (Inflammatory Arthritis)



Professional and caring podiatrists

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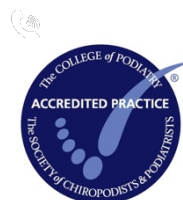


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Treatment Advice



What is gout?

Gout is a type of arthritis and affects one in every 100 people in the UK commonly affecting the big toe.

If you have gout, uric acid, a chemical made by your body, forms tiny crystals (called tophi) in your joints. This can trigger pain, redness and swelling in your joints, causing arthritis. The crystals may also form in other tissues (such as ligaments and tendons) and under your skin.

Gout sometimes runs in families. It's more common in men, especially as they get older. Other people at risk include:

- women after the menopause
- people who take medicines such as diuretics (water tablets) for blood pressure, or have high levels of cholesterol
- people who are overweight and who drink alcohol, especially beer

Symptoms

The first time you have an attack of gout, you may notice:

- sudden pain in your joint - especially at night. The pain gets worse over a few hours and is usually at its worst within 24 hrs and lasts for 3 to 10 days.
- swelling and tenderness around the affected part of your joint
- warm, red/purple and shiny skin around your joint, which may feel itchy and peel away
- you may find it hard to move your joint because the pain is so bad, and walking may be difficult due to the pain
- you may feel unwell and have a raised temperature

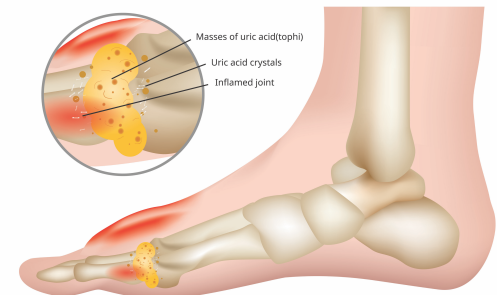
Your joint will return to normal, without any pain or swelling, between attacks. At first, gout may affect only one of your joints and an attack may last for just a few days. But later on, gout may affect several of your joints at the same time. Eventually, you may have several attacks of gout in a year.

What can help?

- Raise and rest your joint. Don't do any vigorous physical activity (or exercise) or knock your joint.
- Use ice wrapped in a towel and apply it for up to 20 minutes at a time.
- Cut down on alcohol consumption and also soft drinks containing fructose.
- Avoid food that you know can cause attacks.
- If overweight, losing weight will help.
- Drink plenty of water, preferably 10 to 12 glasses a day.
- You can take over-the-counter painkillers, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.

*Avoid eating a lot of red meat, kidneys, liver or seafood, lots of sugary drinks and snacks and fatty foods
Don't drink more than 14 units of alcohol a week (and do not have it all on 1 or 2 days)*

Gout (Inflammatory Arthritis)



Treatment options?

An attack of gout should be treated as soon as your symptoms appear. You may be able to treat mild symptoms with a mixture of self-help measures and over-the-counter pain killers. But if your symptoms are bad or the self-help approach isn't working, your doctor can prescribe stronger medicines to ease your joint pain and swelling.

Four to six weeks after your first attack of gout, your GP may arrange for you to have a blood test to check the level of uric acid in your blood. If you have a blood test straight after an attack of gout, your uric acid levels may seem lower than they really are.

If you've had gout for a long time, your doctor may ask for an X-ray to see if your joint is damaged.

If you have frequent attacks or you have high levels of uric acid in your blood, you may need uric acid-lowering medicine.