

Uric acid is a by-product of purines, which are chemicals that are naturally found in our food. Uric acid may build up because the kidneys have difficulty processing the acid at a regular rate, or because our diet contains too much food that is purine-rich, like red meat, shellfish, red wine and beer.

When uric acid is present in high concentrations in the blood, it can crystallise, causing severe pain and discomfort. For 90% of people, these crystals will develop at either the big toe joint or other joints in the feet. This location in the feet occurs because cooler temperatures promote crystallisation, and our feet are often the coolest part of our bodies.



WHAT DOES GOUT FEEL LIKE?

When the uric acid crystallises, this is known as an 'attack' or 'flare-up' of gout. You'll feel a sharp pain that can come on suddenly, and the joint may feel warm, red and swollen.

ARE YOU MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP GOUT?

Gout can affect anyone at any time, but often affects men between the ages of 30 and 60. If one of your family members has had gout, you are more likely to develop it too, so should be careful about consuming food that has excess purine levels. Other contributing factors may include aspirin, diuretics, stress, high blood pressure, surgery and diabetes.

HOW IS GOUT TREATED?

The first step to managing gout is to ensure that a high level of uric acid is causing your symptoms with a blood test. This will rule out other causes of damage to the joints causing your pain.

Aside from reducing your intake of purine-rich foods, we recommend helping wearing warm socks and keeping your feet warm to help prevent crystallisation. Staying active and exercising (when you don't have a flare) will help manage other factors that contribute to gout such as obesity, stress and diabetes.



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Our Values – We:



love what we do



challenge the status quo



are stronger together



aim to continuously improve



do what we say, sometimes more, never less