

Gout

Gout is when your joints become red, sore, and swell (*inflamed*). This is caused by the buildup of uric acid crystals in the joints. Uric acid is a chemical that is normally in the blood. If the level of uric acid gets too high in the blood, these crystals form in your joints and tissues. Over time, these crystals can form into masses near the joints and tissues. These masses can destroy bone and cause the bone to look misshapen (*deformed*).



HOME CARE

- **Do not** take aspirin for pain.
- Only take medicine as told by your doctor.
- Rest the joint as much as you can. When in bed, keep sheets and blankets off painful areas.
- Keep the sore joints raised (*elevated*).
- Put warm or cold packs on painful joints. Use of warm or cold packs depends on which works best for you.
- Use crutches if the painful joint is in your leg.
- Drink enough fluids to keep your pee (*urine*) clear or pale yellow. Limit alcohol, sugary drinks, and drinks with fructose in them.
- Follow your diet instructions. Pay careful attention to how much protein you eat. Include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk products in your daily diet. Talk to your doctor or dietitian about the use of coffee, vitamin C, and cherries. These may help lower uric acid levels.
- Keep a healthy body weight.

GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF:

- You have watery poop (*diarrhea*), throw up (*vomit*), or have any side effects from medicines.
- You do not feel better in 24 hours, or you are getting worse.
- Your joint becomes suddenly more tender, and you have chills or a fever.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.

Document Released: 09/26/2009 Document Revised: 01/08/2016 Document Reviewed: 07/31/2013
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