

Gout

Gout is a type of arthritis. It happens when a waste product (called uric acid) builds up in the bloodstream. People who have gout often feel pain in their elbows, knees, ankles and other joints.

Medication is the best way to treat attacks of gout and to manage it in the long term but some changes to your diet may help.

Drink plenty of fluids every day

- Drink lots of fluid throughout the day. Aim for around at least eight glasses of fluid a day.
- Water is best as it is cheap, easy and healthy.

Limit alcohol

- It is best to avoid alcohol, especially beer and spirits.
- If you do choose to drink alcohol, have no more than two standard drinks a day.

Enjoy a healthy lifestyle

- Eat plenty of fruit, vegetables and wholegrain breads and cereals as well as lean meat and dairy foods.
- Aim for a minimum of 30 minutes of activity a day.
- Losing weight quickly can cause a gout attack. Instead of dieting, focus on making long-term changes to your eating and activity.

Include dairy foods daily

- Aim to have two or three servings a day of dairy products. One serve is any of the following:
 - one cup (250 ml) milk
 - one tub (200 grams) yoghurt
 - two slices (40 grams) cheese.
- Choose low fat milk products to prevent new gout and to reduce the build-up of uric acid in the blood.

Limit foods high in purines

- Avoid large serves of meat, fish or chicken. Try to eat at most a piece about the size of your palm each day.
- Limit offal (liver, kidney, brain, heart – including pâté).
- Limit yeast extracts (Vegemite™ or Promite™) and meat based gravy.
- Limit sardines, anchovies, prawns, mackerel, herring, fish roe, shrimp and shellfish.

Some handy tips

- Eating one to two serves of cherries each day can reduce the risk of gout. One serve is ½ cup (10 to 12 cherries).
- A daily supplement of 500mg Vitamin C can reduce blood uric acid levels. Always check with your GP before using supplements, in case there are potential issues.