### Management of gout

#### Managing gout flares

**Offer an NSAID, colchicine or short course of oral corticosteroid**
- Take into account comorbidities, co-prescriptions and preferences
- Consider adding a PPI with NSAID

**If NSAIDs or colchicine unsuitable or ineffective**
- Consider intra-articular or intramuscular corticosteroid injection

**Do not offer an IL-1 inhibitor** unless NSAIDs, colchicine and corticosteroids are unsuitable or ineffective.
- Refer to rheumatology before prescribing

**Advise**
- that applying ice packs to the affected joint (cold therapy) in addition to taking prescribed medicine may help alleviate pain
- Consider a follow-up appointment after a gout flare has settled to:
  - measure serum urate level
  - provide information
  - assess lifestyle and comorbidities
  - review medications and discuss risks and benefits of long-term ULT

#### Information and support

**Provide tailored information** at diagnosis and during follow-up appointments

**Explain:**
- causes, and symptoms and signs, of gout
- that the disease progresses without intervention because high levels of urate in the blood will lead to the formation of new urate crystals
- any risk factors for gout they have, including genetics, excess body weight or obesity, medicines they are taking, and comorbidities such as CKD or hypertension
- how to manage gout flares and the treatment options available
- that gout is a lifelong condition that will benefit from long-term ULT to eliminate urate crystals and prevent flares, shrink tophi and prevent long-term joint damage
- where to find other sources of information and support such as local support groups, online forums and national charities

#### Diet and lifestyle

**Explain** that there is not enough evidence to show that any specific diet prevents flares or lowers serum urate levels.

**Advise** people with gout:
- to follow a healthy, balanced diet
- that excess body weight or obesity, or excessive alcohol consumption, may exacerbate gout flares and symptoms

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This is a summary of the advice on management of gout in NICE’s guideline on gout: diagnosis and management. CKD, chronic kidney disease; GFR, glomerular filtration rate; IL-1, interleukin-1; NSAID, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug; PPI, proton pump inhibitor; ULT, urate-lowering therapy

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Published: June 2022

In June 2022, this was an off-label use of NSAIDs and corticosteroids. See NICE’s information on prescribing medicines.