

Gout: diagnosis and management

Information for the public

Published: 9 June 2022

www.nice.org.uk

Gout: the care you should expect

Gout is a type of arthritis that causes pain, swelling, heat and redness in joints. It can come on very suddenly and be very painful. Gout is caused by a build-up of a substance called uric acid, which can form crystals in or around joints. Gout usually affects the big toe joint (also called the first MTP joint). It can also affect other joints, such as the midfoot, ankles, knees, elbows and fingers. It is more common in men than in women, and in people who have chronic kidney disease. The risk of gout increases with age.

We want this guideline to make a difference to people with gout by making sure:

- healthcare professionals can more easily recognise the symptoms of gout and provide the best care
- people with gout are given good information so they understand their condition and get the best out of their treatment
- people with gout can have long-term treatment to manage the condition and prevent future gout attacks (flares).

Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your healthcare professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns.

To help you make decisions, think about:

- What matters most to you – what do you want to get out of any treatment?
- What are you most worried about – are there risks or downsides to the treatment that worry you more than others?
- How will the treatment affect your day-to-day life?
- What happens if you don't want to have treatment?

If you need more support to understand the information you are given, tell your healthcare professional.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Where can I find out more?

The [NHS website](#) has more information about gout.

The organisations below can give you more advice and support.

- [UK Gout Society](#), info@goutsociety.org
- [Versus Arthritis](#), enquiries@versusarthritis.org, 0800 5200 520

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

We wrote this guideline with people who have been affected by gout and staff who treat and support them. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

ISBN: 978-1-4731-4604-4