Steps for Avoiding Gout Attacks and Flare-Ups

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Reduce Gout Flare Up

One of the main fundamental components of " rel="noreferrer noopener">living with gout is avoiding the acute or recurrent attacks that characterize the disease. Since gout is a chronic condition, avoiding or reducing the frequency of flare-ups is a hallmark of effective gout treatment. Like with any disease, the first step is having the condition properly diagnosed. Unfortunately, many people live with gout and do not even know they have it, especially in the early stages. This is problematic because, with current therapy, most people can live a normal life if the disease is diagnosed and treated early on. So, what can you do to reduce gout flare up?

Once a diagnosis of gout has been made, the treatment consists of termination of the acute attack, prevention of recurrent attacks, and prevention of further deposition of crystals and resolving existing tophi. The second step, preventing recurrent attacks, is achievable through a variety of ways including lifestyle modification and medication. The medication primary used to achieve this is colchicine, which is typically taken orally but can be given through an IV if the GI tract does not tolerate the oral medication. (1)

Lifestyle and Diet Changes

Lifestyle and diet modification can play a huge role in reducing the frequency and intensity of gout attacks. The American Dietetic Association (ADA) has several recommendations to help prevent painful flare-ups. The first is to drink 8-16 glasses (2-4 liters) of fluid per day with at least half being water. Avoiding alcohol is also recommended as alcohol can increase the concentration of uric acid in the blood, which is likely to trigger an attack. Food choices also have an impact on gout flare-ups. The ADA recommends eating a moderate amount of healthy proteins including low-fat dairy, eggs, tofu, and nut butter while limiting your daily intake of meat, fish, and poultry to 4-6 ounces or 113-170 grams. (2)

Alternative therapies for the prevention of gout attacks are also being looked at, and though more research needs to be done, there are a few potential options available if you’re not finding the relief you are looking for. Coffee drinking has been shown to have an association with lower uric acid levels, which may be good news for gout sufferers. Vitamin C and Cherries have also been associated with lower levels of uric acid, though in some cases megadoses of vitamin C have been shown to increase these levels in the body. (2) Consider adding fruits (like oranges) and vegetables high in vitamin C to your daily diet before adding supplementation. As with all therapies, it is important to discuss these alternative remedies with your doctor before making any changes to your treatment regimen.

Other lifestyle choices that are likely to reduce the frequency and intensity of gout attacks include: maintaining a healthy body weight and wearing the proper footwear for your condition. Carrying extra weight places more stress on the joints, especially the joints of the foot and ankle, where gout attacks are likely to occur. Getting to an ideal body weight can be achieved through proper diet and exercise, and can have a profound impact on the severity of the condition. Choosing the right shoes can also make a big difference in your quality of life. Gout sufferers should wear shoes that have ample cushioning, support, and motion control. Wider shoes are also encouraged because

they don’t crowd the foot, thereby taking pressure off of the joints most likely to experience the attacks. Preventing flare-ups is possible if these changes are implemented.