6 Nutrition Tips for People Living With Gout

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Nutrition Tips for Gout

Gout is a painful form of arthritis caused by excess uric acid in the body. This uric acid crystalizes in the blood and builds up in the joints, causing considerable discomfort and immobility of the joints. This condition is increasingly common, affecting 8 million Americans today.

Medications are available to alleviate gout and its associated symptoms, but lifestyle change is equally important when dealing with this painful disorder. One difficulty people diagnosed with gout face is finding a balanced diet and lifestyle that reduces arthritic flare-ups.

Most people who have gout believe that avoiding nitrogen-containing compounds (known as purines which eventually become uric acid) is the surest way to cure gout symptoms. However, it isn't as simple as that. Some foods containing purines are fine to eat as long as you are thoroughly hydrated. In addition to hydration, there are other dietary and lifestyle factors to monitor to stay pain-free.

1. **Lay off soda** – Sugary drinks like non-diet sodas are some of the most common perpetrators of gout pain. Fructose, the highly concentrated sugar in soda, has been attributed as the cause of gout inflammation. Quit drinking soda altogether or switch to diet soda. Patients with gout had no incidences of diet soda causing gout pain.
2. **Avoid crash dieting** – Trying to lose weight quickly (crash dieting) causes not only your blood sugar levels to rise and fall drastically, but your uric acid levels as well. People who crash diet are often dehydrated as a result, which has been proven to exacerbate gout pain.
3. **Drink coffee** – It has been long thought that coffee was a contributor to gout attacks because of its high caffeine content, but we now know this is not the case. Studies have shown that the blood uric acid levels of people over the age of 20 were lower in coffee drinkers than in people who did not drink coffee. Having a morning cup of Joe can help improve your gout pain. Just make sure that you aren't loading it up with sugar and whole-fat dairy.

4. **Drink lots of water** – Several studies have linked a high water intake to lower incidences of gout pain. The amount of water each individual should drink daily depends on their current medical conditions and medications. To determine how much water you should be drinking daily, visit your healthcare provider.
5. **Eat low-fat dairy products** – In recent studies, individuals who consumed a serving or more of low-fat milk each day were observed to have less uric acid in their blood. Low-fat dairy has been shown to help the body excrete uric acid due to its high protein and low purine content.
6. **Avoid certain medications** – Cyclosporine is a drug that is used to treat chronic eye infections by increasing tear production. Unfortunately, one of its side effects is the production of excess uric acid in the blood, leading to gout. If you currently take cyclosporine, ask your healthcare provider if there is an alternative medication for the eye condition that has less drastic side effects.

Bonus Tip:

To help you on your new pain-free lifestyle journey, avoid these foods and beverages:

- Red meat.
- Shellfish.
- Organ meats (liver, tongue).
- Excessive alcohol.
- Sodas.
- Candies.
- Some of the sweeter fruits.