In-Depth Research Takes Us One Step Closer to a Cure for Gout

by AMY MANLEY

One Step Closer to a Gout Cure

Gout is a form of inflammatory arthritis. In fact, it is the most common form. Supposedly the condition is easy to treat, but recent research shows that there are several misconceptions surrounding gout and a gout cure, and these misconceptions are preventing effective treatment.

Gout and Medication Treatment

While gout is rather painful and common among individuals, it can be treated effectively with medication, unlike many other forms of arthritis. Additionally, if the national and international guidelines for treatment regarding gout are adhered to properly, treatment not only masks the symptoms, but offers a cure. However, the lack of proper knowledge and misconceptions among doctors and patients are preventing cures from taking place.

Proper treatment and the possibility of a gout cure is more important than ever, due to the popularity of this condition. According to statistics, gout currently effects 1.4% of the adult population, and those with this condition take four or more days off of work due to their condition. Also, the health costs for those with gout are almost twice as high as those found within the general population.

Researchers are excited about the new information gained through studies. Recent research showed that if the condition and corresponding treatment is explained clearly to patients and physicians, 9 out of 10 patients with gout can receive effective treatment.

A Decline in Urite Levels

Due to the cause of this condition, which is the formation of sodium urate crystals in and around the joints and the raised urite levels in the body, maintaining a healthy diet and utilizing drug therapy is crucial. When urite levels are reduced and kept at low levels, the body is able to heal itself and prevent more crystals from forming. Overtime, the lack of crystal formation and reduction of current crystals can result in a complete gout cure.

Drug Therapy

A recent study of over 100 people with gout, held within a hospital based setting, offered proof of the hypothesis that the right treatment regimen will lead to a cure. The study was held by Mike Doherty, Professor of Rheumatology at the University of Nottinham. It consisted of patient education, individualized lifestyle choices and the appropriate drug therapy. Drugs including allopurinol, feduxostat or benzbromarone, were given at escalated doses rather than the standard dose.

According to results, 92% of patients reached therapeutic levels of reduced uric acid levels after one year, and the number of attacks in the patients were much less than the previous year. With time and further research, researchers are confident that nearly 99.9% of patients can achieve complete relief once their gout treatment

begins.

BSR President Dr. Chris Deighton says: “By making it easier for our primary care colleagues to have ready access to best practice guidelines, we hope to see a major reduction in the burden of the disease, benefiting not just the individuals spared the extreme pain of severe gout, but the wider economy too.”

Professor Doherty’s team is now running a new clinical trial, largely funded by Arthritis Research UK, to examine the effectiveness of a nurse-led package of care for gout patients in a general practice setting. Nurses in primary care already undertake a substantial amount of the successful management of other common conditions such as asthma and diabetes, and it is hoped that nurse-led management of gout will also prove feasible and successful in general practice.

If successful, data from the trial could be used to persuade government departments to include gout within their framework for standards of care for GPs, and patients might just find themselves a step closer to that elusive "cure".

Keep in Mind

Although there is sufficient evidence that gout can be properly managed, it is impossible to be cured. These effective treatments simply manage the condition at a level where the disease feels as though it is nonexistent. As mentioned above, uric acid level management is essential when it comes to coping with this disease. If these levels are managed, your symptoms may appear less severe. Make sure to talk to your doctor about uric acid level management so you can keep a tight grip on your symptoms. You can also talk to your doctor about combination medicine and anti-inflammatory drug treatment.