# Top Tips for Managing a Gout Attack

by YVONNE BANKS

## How to Relieve a Gout Attack

If you have gout, you know that the pain is the worst symptom from it. Therefore, pain management is a key component in living with this condition. A gout attack is painful and the affected joint becomes swollen and warm to the touch. It occurs commonly in the big toe but has been known to affect knees, fingers, and wrists. It is a common type of arthritis, even more common than rheumatoid arthritis. Pain management is a crucial part of living with gout. Though a gout attack is self-limiting and will go away on its own, it can still be agonizing for the patient who suffers with it.

### Relieving a Gout Attack

1. **Rest**. Many patients find the best way to deal with a gout attack is to stay in bed as much as possible.
2. **Use ice on it.** Icing the affected joint will work to decrease the inflammation and in turn, reduce the pain experienced.
3. **Keep clothing off.** If the big toe has gout, keep your shoes and socks off of it or invest in a kind of shoe that is best for those with gout. The weight of material may add to your discomfort wherever the gout is, so try to keep bedding, etc. from the area.
4. **Adjust your diet.**You will want limit alcohol, meat, and other foods that aggravate gout.
5. **Stay hydrated.**Water is essential to flush uric acid crystals out of your system so drink plenty of it.
6. **Take NSAIDS.** You may find taking ibuprofen (Motrin) helps to reduce the pain and discomfort of gout. It is an anti-inflammatory drug known as a NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug) that is commonly used for the management of gout. If you do not have kidney issues, this is a great drug to use.

7. **Steroidal treatment.** If NSAIDs cannot be used, prednisone is commonly given for the treatment of gout. NOTE: Prednisone can cause your face to become “puffy” and you will be hungrier than usual. It may also suppress your immune system a bit and make blood sugars run higher if you are diabetic.
8. **Gout-specific drugs.** There are some drugs that are specially targeted for gout, such as colchicine (Colcrys). This drug will block uric acid crystals but it needs to be taken within 12 to 24 hours of a gout attack. Other medications are Allpurinol and Probenecid. You can ask your doctor if he thinks you will benefit from these drugs.
9. **Be patient.** Sometimes waiting it out means it will clear up within a few days. You just take the medication and stay in bed. You will be better in no time.

Some people go years before another gout attack, however, others may experience one within a year. If you find that you have frequent attacks, you should speak with your physician about longer term management of this condition.