Avoiding High-Purine Foods to Manage Gout During the Holidays

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Enjoying the Holidays With Gout

Many gout suffers experience painful toes and flare-ups during the holiday season, and the reason is simple: they do not watch what they eat and drink. The weather is cold, as well. Holidays with gout come with changes in diet and overindulging in high-purine foods, and alcoholic beverages are well known trigger factors for a gout attack. Purine gets broken down into uric acid in the body. The toes are most often affected because the toe is one of the coolest parts of the body and the uric acid is sensitive to changes in the temperature.

How can you avoid these problems so you can enjoy Christmas and New Year's Eve? Consider the following tips:

- Avoid high-purine foods: organ meats such as liver, heart and kidneys; ox, venison, rabbit, as well as meat extracts found in stock cubes or gravies; sweetbreads; fish and shellfish – especially crab herring, mackerel, sardines, trout, shrimps, crabs and anchovies. Other high-purine foods include yeast , asparagus, cauliflower, mushrooms, as well as beans and peas.
- Limit, or avoid the consumption of alcohol, especially red wine and beer.
- Stay away from sugary foods that are highly processed and include high fructose corn syrup or glucose-fructose syrup. Examples include bread, yogurts, pizzas, cereals and condiments, such as ketchup, mayonnaise and salad dressings.

Gout-Friendly Holiday Foods

Let's focus now on what you can eat. Best foods to control pain and stop attacks are minimally processed, home cooked and low in purine. You can consume plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. This include cherries and vitamin C-rich fruits (this nutrient may help reduce the levels of uric acid in the blood). Starchy vegetables such as rice, potatoes, as well as lentils, quinoa and oats are low in purine, and rich in fibers and nutrients.

Low-fat dairy products, such as low-fat yogurt and cottage cheese can also improve your uric acid levels. Don't forget to drink plenty of water, because dehydration can increase the risk of crystals forming in the joints.

Gout Holiday Recipes

Try these delicious meals this Christmas: Orange and Duck Confit Salad and Coconut Vanilla Pudding

Orange and Duck Confit Salad

It takes only five minutes to prepare it, serves two people. In a small bowl combine 1/2 tablespoon of vinegar with 2 table spoons of fresh orange juice, 1/2 tablespoon of Dijon mustard and 1/2 tablespoon of olive oil. Then, mix it all together. Next, add salt and pepper to taste. In a larger bowl mix a half of a small duck confit leg (shredded, without skin, fat or bones), 3 cups mixed greens, 2 tablespoons chopped hazelnuts and 2 oranges (sliced).

Drizzle with vinegar and serve.

Coconut Vanilla Pudding

A great desert, and takes only 10 minutes to have it ready. It yields 4 cups. In a small sauce pan combine 1 1/2 cups of coconut milk with 2/3 cups of sugar, 1/3 cup of corn starch, one egg (optional) and 1 tablespoon vanilla. Cook over medium to low heat and stir frequently to avoid clumping. After five to eight minutes, the mixture will gradually get thicker. When ready, pour in cups, add cinnamon and berries and chill in the fridge for a couple of hours.

Other Reminders to Enjoy the Holidays

Now that we have outlined what to eat and what not to eat to avoid a gout flare-up during the holidays, there are also also measures to take to enjoy this special time.

At all costs, make sure you avoid and manage stress. While holidays can bring a lot of cheer, stress can be created too, which is not good, as stress can contribute to gout flare-ups.

If there is any situation during the holidays that causes you stress, try avoiding it. Likewise, if there are certain friends, family members or loved ones who causes you stress, set boundaries. This may be difficult, but in the end it will be worth it to maintain your health and take care of yourself.

Another way to avoid stress is not hosting any gatherings. Maybe you are used to hosting the holidays for your family, but you can ask another family member to do it, so you do not have added levels of stress.

In Conclusion

Keep in mind, even if you have gout, you can have an exciting holiday season. But your health and yourself must come first. Through eating the right foods, avoiding the wrong ones and managing your stress levels, you should be able to avoid a gout flare-up this season. If you are worried, be sure to talk to your doctor to devise a plan. They can recommend even more tips to make sure you are comfortable and happy this holiday season.