

## First line advice: For Patients with Gout

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**This information sheet has been provided to give you basic initial information about what to do if you are suffering from Gout. If you need more detailed advice and support, please ask your doctor to refer you to a dietitian.**

Gout is caused by an excess of uric acid (urate) which can inflame your joints causing severe pain and swelling. You can help reduce symptoms by choosing a healthy diet, with regular meals, a good fluid intake (water or non-alcoholic drinks) and avoiding foods high in purine. Uric acid is formed from the purines that are found in foods.

**The following are the first steps of diet and lifestyle changes to improve your symptoms:**

**Eat regular meals** – Avoid large meals, as well as missing meals. Fasting for short periods may induce an attack of gout. Aim for 3 small meals a day.

### **Avoid food high in Purine Foods -**

- Meats: Liver, veal, offal (brain, heart, sweetbreads) turkey and venison, goose
- Meat extract: Bovril, Oxo, rich gravies
- Sea food: anchovies, herring, mackerel, sardines, fish roes, crab, shrimps, sprats, whitebait, fish, roes, mussel and scallops
- Vegetables: asparagus, cauliflower, mushrooms, spinach, peas
- Lentils: kidney beans, lima beans, soya beans
- Yeast extract e.g. Marmite and beer

**Control your weight** - If overweight, the levels of uric acid often rises. Losing weight will significantly reduce urate levels, but avoid crash dieting. Aim to reduce intake of fried foods, fatty meats, butter and oils.

**Drink plenty of Fluids** - You should drink approximately 1.5 litres (6-8 glasses) a day of water, non alcoholic drinks, including tea and coffee. Drink more when you are exercising or during hot weather.

**Avoid excessive intakes of alcohol drinks** - Not more than 3 units per day for men and 2 units per day for women, with alcohol-free days in between. Beer, port and stout contain high levels of purine.

**Increase your levels of activity-** Try to get plenty of exercise. This will help reduce urate levels and reduces the risks of gout. Aim for 30mins activity at least 5 times a week.

*For Further information*

British Dietetic Association web: [www.bda.co.uk](http://www.bda.co.uk)

UK Gout Society web: [www.ukgoutsociety.org](http://www.ukgoutsociety.org)

This information sheet was produced by the Community Dietitians and is intended to be given by a health professional only. It is not a substitute for proper medical diagnosis or dietary advice given by a Registered Dietitian. The advice is not appropriate for certain medical conditions such as diets that require the exclusion or restriction of particular foods. If in doubt, please check with your medical practitioner.

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