

YOUR GOUT QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Gout & Diet



Perspective from **CHRISTOPHER PARKER, DO**

Does diet cause gout?

Diet alone does not “cause” gout. Diet is just one of many contributing factors. Other factors include obesity, family history, age and gender. Untreated high blood pressure, diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and heart and kidney diseases also increase the risk of gout.

What foods should I eat or avoid?

I offer two pieces of advice: Eat healthy, and remember that nobody is perfect.

Fruits, vegetables and nuts are good. Low-fat dairy products such as cheese and milk may help reduce the risk of future attacks. Leafy, green vegetables and foods high in vitamin C, such as oranges, bell peppers and red cabbage, are also good. Try to avoid sweets. (But on your birthday, you can have a piece of cake!)

High-purine foods like meat or seafood may increase your risk of an attack, as can trout and organ meats like liver. But remember, a trigger food for one person may not affect another. Try logging what you eat to track how certain foods make you feel and if you experience an attack after eating them.

Will cutting out alcohol and soft drinks prevent gout attacks?

Limiting your consumption of alcohol and sugary drinks is wise. It doesn’t guarantee you won’t have another attack, but it can reduce your risk. Drink lots of water, as it helps flush uric acid through your system while also hydrating you.

Will cherry juice or apple cider vinegar cure my gout?

These are old wives’ tales. Granted, old wives were smart and made good observations. Perhaps, somewhere along the way, an old wife convinced her ailing husband to swap alcohol for cherry juice. His gout attacks grew less frequent, so the old wife deduced that the cherry juice had healing powers.

But today, we know that cherry juice or apple cider vinegar will not cure your gout or prevent attacks. If you are serious about controlling your gout, you should seek treatment from a health care provider, preferably a gout specialist. Your provider can check your blood and advise if you need medication to control your uric acid levels. Proper care, along with staying hydrated and maintaining a healthy diet, will empower you to manage your gout.