

Gout Can Strike at Any Age
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In the past when I had thought about people who are affected with gout, I had always thought of persons who were middle age or older. However, I recently learned that gout can also strike those in their teens.

What Are The Signs and Symptoms of Gout?

The classic symptoms are: sudden, severe pain, redness and swelling of a joint. If a teen plays sports, such as basketball or football, and awakens with a painful ankle that is also red and swollen the first instinct may be that they twisted it during the game. The next instinct may be that the teen may have been bitten by a spider. Surprisingly however, the diagnosis may be gout, which is usually not something most people think of a teen having. Anyone with gout like symptoms should seek medical care, as untreated gout can lead to joint damage and worsening pain.

What is Gout?

Excessive levels of uric acid in the blood which deposit uric acid crystals in your joints or surrounding tissues.

What Are Risk Factors for Developing Gout?

1. High purine diet, which is found in organ meats such as liver, brains, kidney and sweetbreads; and anchovies, shrimp, sardines, fish roe and herring.
A moderate amount of purines is found in meat, game, fowl and fish not mentioned above, lentils, whole grain cereal, beans, peas, asparagus, mushrooms, cauliflower and spinach.
2. Excess consumption of alcohol, which is defined as 2 drinks or more a day for men or 1 drink or more a day for women.
3. Weight gain of 30 pounds or more than your ideal weight during adulthood.
4. High blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol and arteriosclerosis.
5. Use of thiazide diuretics to treat hypertension, low dose aspirin and anti-rejection meds.
6. Family history of gout.
7. Men aged 40 – 50.
8. Postmenopausal women.
9. Dehydration.
9. Cancer and certain types of red blood cell disorders.
10. Recent serious illness, surgery or trauma.

Information for this article was obtained from the Mayo Clinic at www.mayoclinic.com.