

German League against Rheumatism: How to contact us

Gout is a rheumatic illness.
That is why we know a lot about it.
You can learn gymnastic exercises from us.
Or exchange ideas with other people
who have rheumatic illnesses.

We would like to help you further:

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What helps against gout?

The doctor first takes a blood sample.
This is so that he can tell
how much uric acid is in your body.
He can also take liquid
from the painful joint.
He examines this liquid
for uric acid crystals.
At the beginning there is little point
in taking X-ray pictures.
This is because gout
can only be seen in x-ray pictures
if you have had
the illness for several years.
Medicines are not always needed
for gout.
It is important to keep your weight
at a healthy level.
You should also exercise regularly.

Food is also very important.
Food must not contain too many purines.
For instance, there are a lot of purines
in meat and some sorts of fish.
Peas, lentils and white beans
also contain a lot of purines.
You should also not drink alcohol,
especially beer.
On the other hand,
there are only a few purines in salad,
potatoes, milk and milk products.
If this does not help,
there are medicines against gout.
They work in different ways.
The doctor knows
which medicine is most suitable.



Gout

Easy to understand



Your doctor has told you that you have gout.

This will give you some information to help you understand this illness better.

Gout – What's that?

Gout is an illness which affects the joints. They often become inflamed and are very painful then. The reason is that uric acid crystals form in the joints. This always causes new inflammation.

What causes gout?

Many foods contain things called purines. These purines become uric acid in the body. Also, certain processes in the body itself always make uric acids. Usually, the uric acid is regularly flushed out of the body in urine. Thus there is never too much uric acid in the body. But in many people this does not work properly. When this happens, the excess uric acid concentrates in particular places in the body. Very often it concentrates in one or more joints. There it changes into uric acid crystals after some time.

These crystals are like little grains of salt. They rub against the joint and at any time it very suddenly starts to be painful. The doctor calls this a gout attack. The pain often starts at night. And often in the joint of the big toe. The painful joint feels hot. It is red to blueish in colour and very swollen. The smallest movement is very painful. You often also have a headache or a fever or feel sick. Sometimes your heart beats much faster than usual.

A gout attack like this can last ten days. After this it may not be painful for a long time. But if nothing is done about the uric acid there will be another gout attack sooner or later. Then the intervals between the gout attacks will become shorter and shorter. The joints be slowly damaged by the repeated inflammation and will become deformed. In the end they will be permanently swollen and every movement will be painful.