GOUT

**Symptoms** Acute pain in affected joints which are red, hot, swollen and excruciatingly painful; sometimes fever; shiny red skin over affected joints.

**Eat more** cabbage, broccoli, celery, onions, leeks, apples, cherries; Water.

**Eat less** coffee, tea, chocolate and salt

**Avoid** alcohol; game, liver, kidney, heart, sweetbreads, yeast and meat extracts; oily fish, roe, taramasalata, mussels, scallops.

Gout is a serious and increasing condition, more common in men (16 in every 1000) than women (3 in every 1000) – rarely before the menopause. The big toe is commonly affected, but it can occur in other joints. Acute attacks need medical treatment.

Caused by deposits of uric acid in the joints, it is often familial. Uric acid is a waste product and removed from the blood passing through the kidneys. Purines are part of this process and although it’s unlikely that particular foods cause gout, those rich in purines aggravate the disease.

Weight should be kept down and the following purine-rich foods avoided altogether: offal; yeast, yeast extracts, meat extracts; oily fish; mussels, scallops, crab, prawns, shrimps, roe, taramasalata, spinach, chard, chocolate and even caviar! Avoid partridge and guinea fowl, other meats contain less purines, but chicken, turkey, and lots of white fish are better than roast beef or steak. Alcohol increases uric acid levels, especially fortified wines (sherry, port, madeira, malmsey) and can trigger gout.

Caffeine is a purine and can aggravate gout, so avoid coffee, chocolate, strong tea and read labels of proprietary medicines as many contain caffeine including some pain killers, cough and cold remedies. No or low carb diets which are high in protein should never be undertaken. Drink lots of water to reduce the risk of kidney stones – four pints a day is the minimum, more in hot weather.

Eat one of the cabbage family of plants and onions, leeks, cherries and apples for their anti-inflammatory action, and celery and parsley as diuretics, every day.

It’s worth taking some of the natural anti-inflammatories like Bio-Strath Willow and Primula formula, Ortis Devil’s Claw capsules, and the natural supplement Glucosamine Sulphate. Flax seed oil is also an excellent anti-inflammatory as a substitute for fish oils, which should be avoided. Use Barlean’s FortiFlax on cereals or mixed with juices or yoghurt, or take Barlean’s Organic Flax Seed capsules, available from selected supermarkets, health stores or [www健康管理essential.com](http://www.healthyandessential.com), call 08700 53 6000