

## Welcome to the: Orthopaedic Opinion Online Website

The website for the answer to all your Orthopaedic Questions

- **Orthopaedic Opinion Online** is a website designed to provide information to patients who have orthopaedic and musculoskeletal problems and are undergoing treatment.
- **Patient information** is provided in the form of downloadable information sheets.
- **Orthopaedic advice** and second opinions can be provided by our expert internationally renowned Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeons.
- **Online review** of patients' X rays or MRI scans can also be provided and any proposed treatment plans reviewed.
- **Book a clinical consultation** with one of our internationally renowned consultant orthopaedic surgeons in Bristol or London.
- **Orthopaedic reports** can be provided for Injury or Accident Claims and Medical Negligence claims.

**This Patient Information Sheet is provided by Orthopaedic Opinion Online**

### Gout

**Link - <http://www.arc.org.uk/arthinfo/patpubs/6015/6015.asp>**

Key words: gout, urate crystals, pyrophosphate arthropathy, arthritis, knee

This Arthritis Research Campaign (ARC) booklet aims to explain what causes gout, the symptoms and the main treatments, and what can be done to help prevent attacks of gout. Medical terms are explained in the glossary at the back of the booklet – sources of further information are also included.

#### **What is gout and what causes it?**

Gout is often said to be the most painful of all the rheumatic diseases. Luckily, it is probably the one for which we have the most satisfactory treatments. Gout has been known for more than 2000 years. It can affect men of any age, but is much less common in women and then, apart from a few rare situations, only occurs after the menopause. The old saying that gout is caused simply by eating and drinking too much has now been proved wrong. It is true that if you over-indulge in alcohol (especially beer and wine) or food, attacks of gout are more likely, but that is not the whole story.

People get gout because there is something unusual about the chemical processes which take place within the body. A substance called urate can build up as crystals in joints. This tendency can be inherited from a parent or grandparent. Gout often runs in families. When urate crystals are deposited in a joint they cause inflammation – the joint becomes red, hot, swollen and intensely painful. The joints are not the only parts of the body to be affected. Urate crystals may also collect under the skin, including sometimes on the ears, forming small, firm, white pimples called 'tophi'. These are not usually painful and generally cause no problems at all.

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