

GOUT FREQUENTLY PAINFUL – RARELY FATAL

Gout was first documented around 2600 BC by the Egyptians.

The Greek physician Hippocrates also wrote about gout in 400 BC. In 200 AD, the Roman surgeon Galen recommending that patients refrain from wine and mead, and that instead they drink asses milk to avoid the disease. From this we can safely conclude that Gout has afflicted mankind for a very long time.

Henry VIII suffered from Gout, as did many famous persons including: Kublai Khan, Nostradamus, Isaac Newton, Thomas Jefferson, Karl Marx, Benjamin Disraeli, Benjamin Franklin, and many others.



By Donald V. Victorson, CLU

GOUT – What is it?

A painful, common type of arthritis that causes swollen, painful joints that occurs most commonly when excessive uric acid builds up in the blood. This happens when the body produces excess uric acid and the kidneys cannot adequately eliminate it, or if you eat too many foods high in purines such as red meat, shell fish, and liver.

What are the symptoms of Gout?

Gout is experienced when needle-like crystals of uric acid form in the connective tissue or lodge themselves in the joints between two bones. This causes inflammatory arthritis resulting in extreme pain and swelling. Most commonly the big toe becomes swollen and extremely painful. Other joints can also be affected including the small toes, and as well the ankle, heel, knee, wrist, elbow fingers, or spine.

Who is likely to develop Gout?

- Males are much more likely to experience Gout than females.
- Persons with Hyperuricemia (elevated levels of uric acid).
- Obese persons, those with hypertension, and diabetics.
- In our affluent society, those who enjoy a diet rich in fats, shellfish, and proteins, and who drink alcohol, especially beer.
- Those who are experiencing diminished kidney function.
- Those with a high level of lead in the body.

Genetics is also thought to be significant:

- If your father had gout you are at risk for gout.

Medications can cause Gout including:

- Diuretics (water pills) prescribed for blood pressure.
- Aspirin
- Drugs prescribed to prevent rejection following transplant surgery.
- Some cancer drugs.

What is the treatment for Gout?

Pain Relief is the first order of business. Over the counter anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen can be helpful, although nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs that are far more effective are usually prescribed. Aspirin should be avoided as it can worsen the condition.

How can attacks of Gout be prevented?

- To prevent future attacks and associated tissue damage it is important to reduce the quantity of purine in the blood by diet modification, and if possible increase the excretion of uric acid into the urine.
- Prescription drugs can be extremely helpful.
- Foods such as beef and shellfish, kidneys, brains, sardines, anchovies, and dried beans should be avoided if possible.
- Sugary soft drinks greatly increase the risk of gout, as does the consumption of high-fructose corn syrup.
- Beer consumption greatly increases the risk of gout.
- Dairy products like milk and cheese reduce the risk of gout.

Underwriting Prognosis

Gout is usually insurable standard.

Where Gout goes untreated however, as the disease progresses permanent damage to the affected joints can cause lumps under the skin called "Tophi". Over time even the bone around the joint may be destroyed. Kidney disease or kidney stones may form because of the elevated level of uric acid in the urinary tract.

Advanced, untreated cases of Gout become much more difficult to underwrite. The likelihood of a rating or declination increases dramatically for those clients also diagnosed with High Blood Pressure, elevated Cholesterol, Heart Disease, Kidney Disease, Diabetes or who are also Obese.

Gout, once known as the disease of Kings, is today all too common in our affluent, exercise averse, coach potato, fast food society.

HOWEVER There is still always Guaranteed Issue Life Insurance

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