

ADVANTAGE

Gout

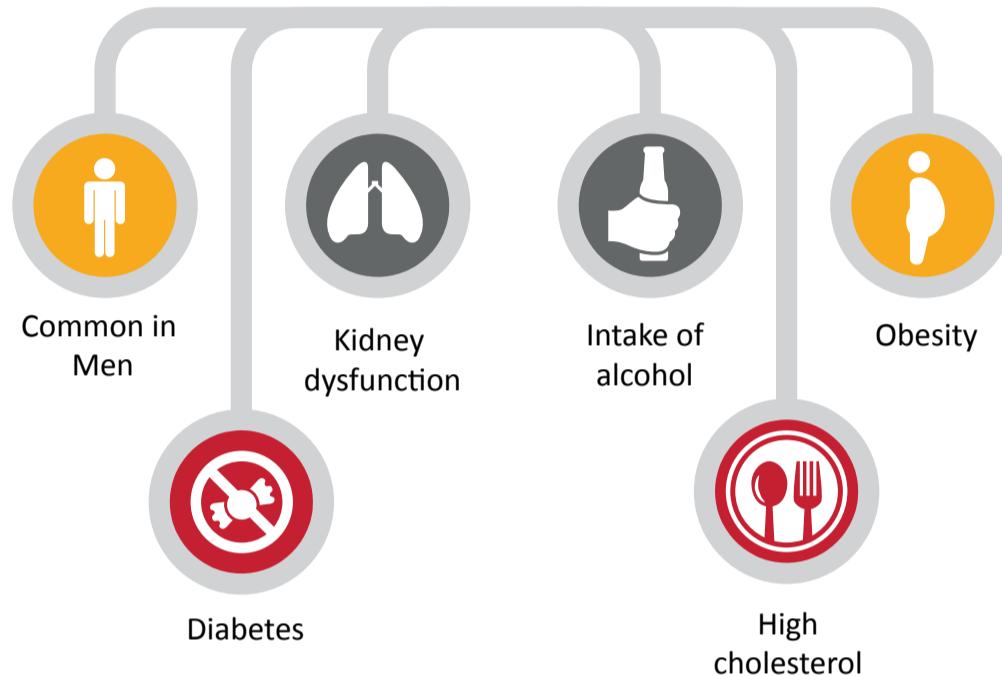


Healthcare ➔ Actuarial ➔ Retirement ➔ Investment ➔ Personal Wealth

November | 2015

Gout is a type of arthritis caused by high amounts of uric acid in the body.

What are the risk factors?



What are the symptoms of Gouts?



Swollen big toe



Swollen joint/s

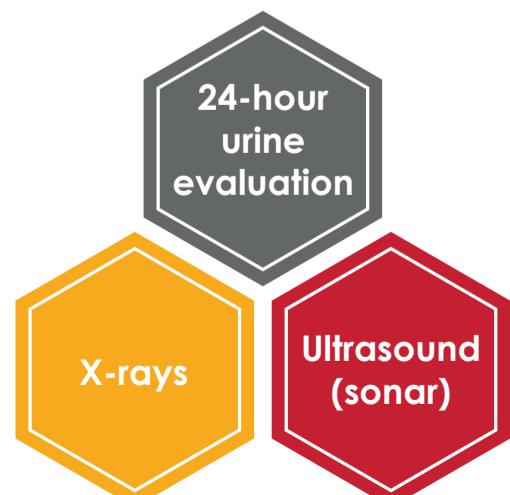
Three principles guide the management of Gout

Treating the acute attack

Giving treatment to prevent attacks

Reducing the amount uric acid in the body

What tests are used to diagnose Gout?



6 questions

for Dr Thapelo Motshudi

1 What is Gout?

Gout is a type of arthritis caused by high amounts of uric acid in the body. This high amount can be due to excessive production, or inadequate excretion, of uric acid by the kidneys.

2 What are the risk factors?

- Gout is much more common in men
- People whose parents have a history of Gout stand a higher chance of also developing the disease
- Kidney dysfunction
- Intake of alcohol, especially beer
- Diets rich in red meats, internal organs, yeast, shellfish and sugar
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- High cholesterol.

3 What are the symptoms of Gout?

Attacks usually start suddenly and reach maximum intensity in about 8-12 hours. Most times it is the big toe that is affected, although other joints like the knee, wrist, elbow and ankle are also prone to the development of Gout. The joint becomes swollen, red, and extremely painful. Symptoms generally resolve after a few days.

4 What tests are used to diagnose Gout?

Very often the history that the patient provides to the doctor and the accompanying physical examination can be enough to diagnose Gout.

A number of investigations are however available:

- Blood measurement for uric acid
- 24-hour urine evaluation
- Analysis of fluid from affected joint
- X-rays
- Ultrasound (sonar).

5 How is it treated?

Three principles guide the management of Gout. These include treating the acute attack; giving treatment to prevent attacks; and reducing the amount uric acid in the body. Since the acute attack involves significant amounts of pain, swelling and inflammation, treatment is directed at managing these symptoms. Therapy to control the underlying high uric acid is only commenced once the acute episode has been managed. Long-term management requires that one reduces the risk factors listed above.

6 What are the complications?

- Severe arthritis
- Secondary infections
- Kidney failure
- Renal stones
- Nerve compression
- Deformities and fractures in joints affected by gout.