

- Gout

# Is your uric acid high?

## Know the causes of hyperuricemia and gout

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Gout comes in stages. It begins with no symptoms but with above normal range in blood uric acid, known as hyperuricemia. A simple blood test can be done to evaluate one's uric acid level. Left unmanaged, hyperuricemia will lead to flare-ups that can last for a week or two. Chronic, uncontrolled hyperuricemia can lead to the formation of kidney stones or permanently damage skin, joints, and other areas of the body when tophi formation develops. This is a nodule composed of uric acid crystals that form under the skin in the later stages of gout, causing deformity.



If you have a high uric acid level and have been diagnosed with hyperuricemia, it is time to take control of your condition to prevent damaging your kidneys, skin, or joints. Even if you are still asymptomatic, do not wait for the flare-ups to begin.

The number one culprit in causing high uric acid is the overconsumption of processed meats, red meats like pork, beef, and other animal-based products, including eggs, poultry, dairy, and even fish and seafood. If you have a high uric acid level and have been diagnosed with hyperuricemia, it is time to take control of your condition to prevent damaging your kidneys, skin, or joints.

Aggravated by eating less or avoiding plant food sources, such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Legumes that include soy, other beans, and lentils have long been wrongly accused of causing high uric acid levels. When in fact, they have less purine content compared to animal meats. The breakdown of purine in the body after consuming purine-containing food produces uric acid.

Is drinking water a habit that you have developed, or is it something that you often neglect and only get reminded when your throat is already parched? Inadequate water intake causes uric acid levels to rise, not to mention other blood values as well. Drinking at least eight glasses of water a day and more when you are exercising or perspiring, will help the kidneys in excreting uric acid. Make it a habit to drink water upon waking up, during meals, and in between meals too. Light-colored urine is a sign that you are well hydrated. Dark colored urine means that you lack water intake and are dehydrated, even if you do not feel thirsty.

Lastly, stress can contribute to hyperuricemia. The body produces more uric acid to combat oxidative stress. Therefore, it may not just be your diet but your stress level that is causing your gout. Learn healthy coping mechanisms and be intentional in your rest and relaxation, even if it means just pockets of rest throughout the day.

It is best to consult a registered nutritionist or dietitian to help you control your uric acid level. When it comes to your health, don't take chances. Let a professional take care of you.