



**Arthritis NZ**  
Mateponapona  
Aotearoa

# Living well with **arthritis**

## What is **gout arthritis**

A **common** form of arthritis

It causes sudden attacks of **severe pain** and **swelling** in the joints, typically starting in the big toe

Uric acid crystals form in the **coldest** part of your body, often the big toe or foot

### Symptoms include:



### Predictable flares

Some Māori and Pacific people have genes that make it harder for their bodies to eliminate uric acid.

Uric acid is a waste product found in the blood, produced when foods are broken down.

Gout occurs when there's too much uric acid in the body, forming crystals that the immune system attacks, leading to inflammation and pain in the joints.

### Key statistics



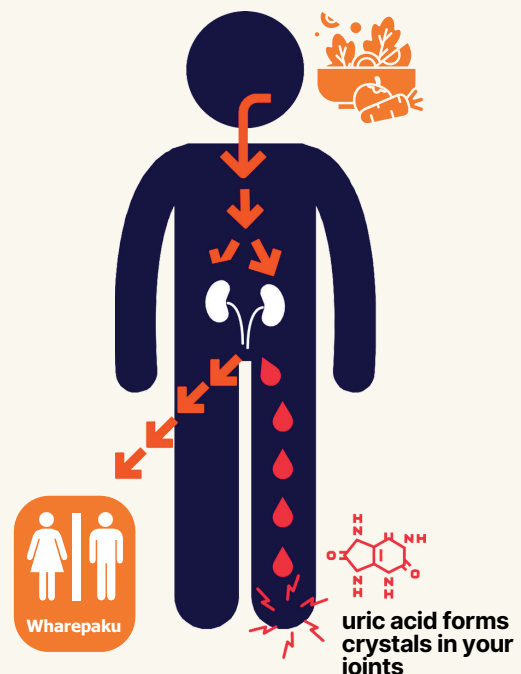
Pacific people are 3 times more likely to have gout than the general population



People of Māori descent are twice as likely to have gout



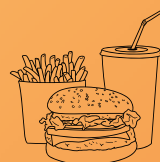
Aotearoa has the highest rate of gout in the world



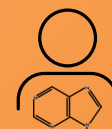
## Prevention & management

- Prevention is key to managing uric acid levels
- Long-term uric acid medicine, maintaining a healthy weight, and a balanced diet are essential
- Gout attack medicines like Voltaren can alleviate pain and swelling during attacks but do not prevent them

## Contributing factors



**Food / drink and weight** These play a role in gout, but only about 10% of high uric acid is caused by dietary choices



### Purines

Purines which are found in all living things, including animals, humans and plants, contribute to uric acid production



### Genetics

Gout arthritis runs in families, but not all members will get it. Some people develop gout arthritis with no family history of the disease



### Medications

Water or fluid pills (diuretics) can reduce the kidney's ability to flush uric acid from the blood

## Managing a gout attack



Take gout medications as prescribed



Rest the affected joint and elevate if possible; apply cold pack for 20 minutes at a time



Stay hydrated



Inform whānau and people around you for support

If you or someone in your whanau has gout, scheduling an appointment with your GP is important. Your GP can measure your uric acid levels and provide personalised gout medication. Adjusting medication dosage may take time, possibly up to 3 months, remember, focusing on prevention is essential for managing uric acid levels effectively!

**Learn more  
and find support**



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