



GOUT TREATMENT

Staying Healthy with Dr. Aieta, N.D.

Dear Dr. Aieta,
I have suffered from recurrent gout symptoms for the past 10 years. Are there any natural treatments that you would recommend to help? When I have an attack, my toe swells up so badly that it makes walking difficult.

Michael L.

Gout is an inherited disorder in which a person's body has a difficult time breaking down purines, which are found highest in certain foods such as fish, shellfish, meat and poultry. This results in elevated uric acid in the blood. When uric acid reaches a high

level in the blood, it precipitates as crystals in the joints – especially the big toe, feet and knees – leading to severe pain and swelling in most cases. Gouty arthritis can occur suddenly without any warning signs. It is typically sparked by trauma or the overindulgence in rich foods and alcohol.

The obvious way to prevent gout is to not overindulge in these ways, but in the case you do, there are many different natural treatment options that are not only effective, but also safe.

The first thing that someone with a gout flare up should do is to drink plenty of fluids and avoid alcohol. My rule of thumb for water intake is to drink half of your body weight in ounces each day. It is best to dilute the contents of the blood to prevent the uric acid from precipitating. I typically prescribe a natural diuretic formula that will help with the excretion of uric acid through the kidneys. The product

contains herbs such as Dandelion leaf, Buchu leaf, Bearberry, Goldenrod and Horsetail grass.

A great way to help decrease uric acid production is by eating eight ounces of fresh or canned cherries. Other berries also work well (such as blueberries, blackberries and Hawthorne berries), and they have added anti-inflammatory effects. To help with uric acid secretion, drinking four to six ounces of raw potato juice every hour really seems to work clinically. To help with the pain and inflammation, I recommend two great natural anti-inflammatories: bromelain and curcumin. I use a product that contains both of these in a capsule form, and I recommend taking two capsules up to four times a day until symptoms start to subside. I've had numerous patients respond quickly to a combination of all these treatments started at the onset of their gout symptoms.

Another treatment that I have found to work well is to take vitamin folate at high dosages of 25 milligrams up to three times a day during acute situations. I have also routinely used a homeopathic remedy called Apis successfully.

So if you are someone who suffers from recurrent gout, you should really think about changing your diet and cutting back on the alcohol. If you do get a flare up, try some of the safe and effective treatments I have outlined above.

Dr. Frank Aieta is a board-certified and licensed Naturopathic Physician with a private practice in West Hartford, Conn. He specializes in the treatment of disease, using natural therapies such as acupuncture, homeopathy, spinal manipulation, clinical nutrition, and herbal medicine. If there is a specific topic you would like to see addressed in an upcoming column, you can e-mail him at DrAieta@aol.com, or visit www.DrAieta.com for additional information.

REACHING FOR IT

Women's Fitness with Lisa Thomas

A healthy lifestyle is for everyone. That means anyone can do it, though it may take some of us a little more push than others to get into healthy habits. But you know that Nike saying? Yeah, that one. Well, I agree: "Just Do It."

What follows is a simple and reasonable list of tips to get you moving toward "it."

1. Eat Right and Keep it Tight. Diet is 75 percent of the battle. Avoid "cheat" eating and eat to be healthy. Try eating five to six small meals a day to keep your metabolism going and avoid hunger. Also, consider healthy foods, timing of nutrients, and portion control, as well as limiting your intake of alcohol, sugar and saturated fats.

2. Plan Your Meals. Determine what you will be eating, and then stick to it. Buy only what you need for planned meals. Stay hydrated, because

water is necessary for the proper function of all cells. It might not taste the same, but replace high-calorie beverages in your diet with water, and you'll be amazed at the results.

3. Get Enough Sleep. Exercise causes damage to muscle fibers, which only heals optimally with proper recovery. Getting eight hours of sleep every night will assure you that you are getting the rest your body needs.

4. Don't Stop Moving. We know we have to do 30 to 40 minutes of cardio three to six days a week, but we can do extra things to keep active and burn calories. Get involved in a local adult sports league, play with your kids, walk the dog and take the stairs. Or, try parking farther away from entrance of stores. Every calorie burned adds up, and adding up these little activities can make a big impact.

5. Lift to Lose. Resistance training increases lean muscle; lean muscle burns more calories. Variety in your training program and exercises is a key component to getting results. Change your workout routine every three to four weeks to get better results.

6. Limit TV, Internet, Sitting-Around Time. Try to limit this time to an hour each night, you'll be amazed at how much more you accomplish and how much better you feel.

7. Set Goals. Be sure to set specific, clear and concise goals. Proper goal-setting is the key to success with any fitness program. Get a notebook to track your goals, calorie intake and workouts; this also keeps you focused.

Being consistent with your workouts and nutrition will help you reach



your fitness goals and your healthier lifestyle. Exercising this week, then forgetting you have a gym membership next week is not the way.

Remember: You can do it. Do it now. Start today and don't stop.

Lisa Thomas is a personal trainer/fitness coach in the Greater Springfield area, as well as owner of Thomas Fitness Center and Fit Kidz of Massachusetts. Contact her at (413) 426-5543 or t.fitness@hotmail.com, or visit www.thomasfitnesscenter.com.