

# Gout (Uric Acid)

High levels of uric acid in the blood could be a sign of the condition gout. Excess uric acid could also cause the development of kidney stones, or, in extreme cases, cause kidney failure. Uric acid is produced by the breakdown of purines, which are nitrogen-containing compounds found in the cells of the body. This test measures the level of uric acid in the blood.

## What is gout?

Gout is a common form of arthritis that causes joint pain, most often appearing in the big toe, but it can affect other joints as well including the hands, elbows, wrists, knees, ankles and feet. The condition is caused by the deposition of needle-like crystals of uric acid that accumulate in joint fluid and tissues, causing inflammation, swelling and severe pain. Attacks of gout may occur sporadically and last for several days.

## Why should I be tested for uric acid levels?

You may want to be tested for high uric acid if you have joint pain or other symptoms that your healthcare provider suspects may be due to gout, or if you have recurrent kidney stones.

## What can be done to lower uric acid levels?

Avoidance of foods and some drinks high in purines and uric acid may help, including:

- Yeast
- Liver
- Kidney
- Anchovies
- Sardines
- Mackerel
- Herring
- Mussels
- Dried beans/peas
- Beer

## What should I do if the results are abnormal or out of range?

It is always recommended you meet with a healthcare provider to determine what your laboratory test results mean to you. Your healthcare provider will review all of your test results and, combined with your health history, will be able to provide an accurate course of action.

**If your results were high:** High uric acid can lead to joint inflammation and pain characteristic of gout, or can cause kidney stones that can damage the kidneys. It is recommended to share your results with your healthcare provider who may order additional testing.

**If your results were normal:** If your results are within the normal range, you should consult with your healthcare provider about the need and frequency of further uric acid testing. Your healthcare provider is best suited to advise you on a timetable for all screening tests.

## What other resources are available to learn more about my health and laboratory tests?

- National Kidney Foundation: [kidney.org](http://kidney.org)
- Lab Tests Online: [labtestsonline.org](http://labtestsonline.org)
- WebMD: [webmd.com](http://webmd.com)

*DLO Direct offers direct access to laboratory testing for informational purposes. A DLO Direct lab test result is not a medical diagnosis and is not intended as medical advice. Only a healthcare provider can interpret lab results and diagnose a medical condition or disease.*

*Because tests have not been ordered by a healthcare provider, third party entities, including Medicare and Medicaid, will not reimburse for these tests.*



[dlodirect.com](http://dlodirect.com) • 800.891.2917