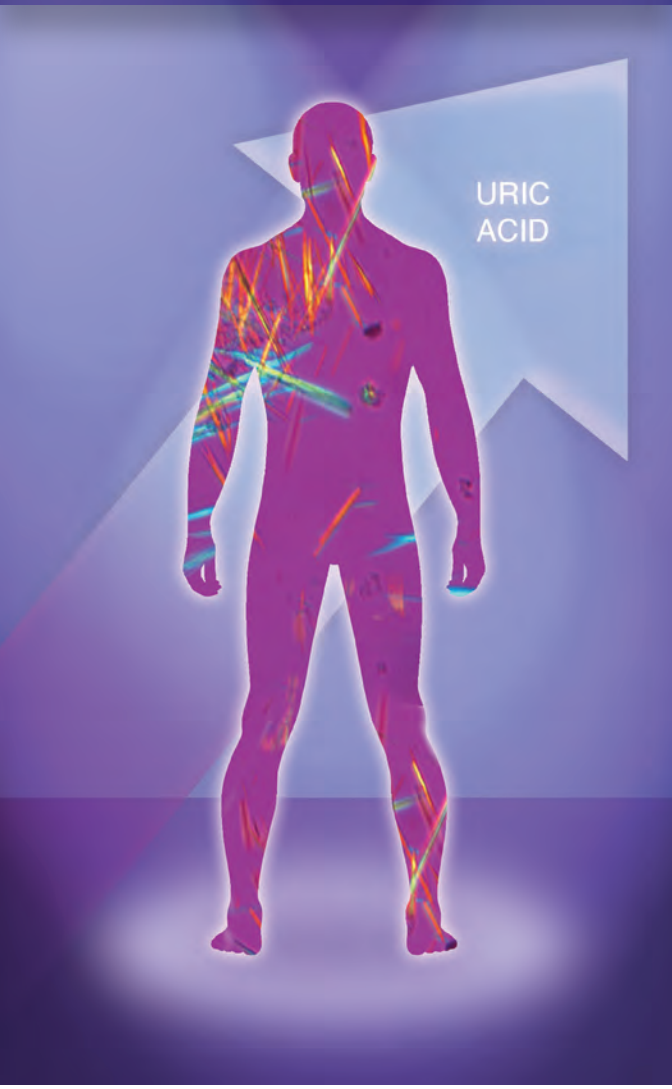
Gout and Uric Acid Tracker



National Kidney Foundation®

Gout, Uric Acid, and Kidneys: What Is the Connection?

- **Uric acid** is a normal waste product found in our blood. But ***high*** uric acid levels can cause painful crystals to form in the joints and kidneys. The crystals in kidneys can also form stones. When high uric acid causes crystals and stones, you have **gout**.
- **Gout causes joint and kidney damage**

  Joints become:
  - Painful
  - Stiff and swollen
  - Deformed

  Kidneys become:
  - Infected when stones block the flow of urine and it backs up (you may not notice a decreased amount of urine if there is a partial blockage)
  - Scarred by sharp stones
- **Kidney infections and scars** can also lead to
  - Kidney disease
  - Kidney failure
- **If you have kidney disease**
  - It is harder for your kidneys to get rid of uric acid.
  - You are at greater risk for having high uric acid levels and for getting gout.
  - High uric acid and gout may make your kidney function worse.
  - Treating gout attacks may be more complicated because you must avoid medications that harm the kidneys.
  - Talk with your healthcare professional about your **GFR** (glomerular filtration rate), a simple blood test that measures your kidney function.

How to Control Gout and Uric Acid, and Protect Your Kidneys

- Talk with your healthcare professional about how to keep uric acid at the recommended level of 6.0 mg/dL or less. You may need long-term treatment.
- When you start using medication to lower uric acid in your blood, the crystals that have formed in your body will break down. This can cause a gout attack (also known as a **gout flare**). To prevent this, your healthcare professional will add another medication to take for several months.
- In order to prevent gout flares, you must take all medications for gout and high uric acid prescribed by your healthcare professional.
- Talk with your healthcare professional about any other medications or supplements you take. Some can raise uric acid levels. Some can make kidney function worse.
- If you have kidney disease, avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS). They can make kidney function worse.

What Else Can You Do?

- **Reduce risk factors for gout and kidney disease**:
  - **Control high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, and high lipid levels**. These conditions can raise uric acid levels and directly harm the kidneys.
- **Reduce the risk for gout flares:**
  - **Avoid gout triggers**. Triggers are lifestyle habits or changes in your body that cause gout flares. Triggers include stress, illness, injuries, weight gain, drugs, and certain foods and beverages (alcohol, meat, fish, and products high in sugar).
  - **Drink at least 8 cups of water a day**. If you have kidney disease, check with your healthcare professional about how much water to drink. Enough water can reduce the risk of forming uric acid crystals.
- **Follow a healthy lifestyle**:
  - Don't smoke.
  - Exercise.
  - Follow a healthy diet prescribed by your healthcare professional.
- **Use the tracker and bring it to all of your healthcare professional visits**.

  The valuable information you record on the chart is specific to only ***you***, and will help your healthcare professional plan the best treatment.

  For additional information on gout and high uric acid, and to use the tracker online, go to **kidney.org/atoz**

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GOUT AND URIC ACID TRACKER

DATE OF EXAM →	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /
sUA (Serum uric acid: uric acid level in the blood)				
GFR (Glomerular filtration rate: blood test for kidney function)				
Urine Albumin-Creatinine Ratio (Urine test for signs of kidney damage)				
Blood Pressure				
Weight				

DATE OF FLARE →	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /
Where is the pain?				
Level of pain (Circle your level of pain)				
Triggers				

Medications and dosages to treat gout				

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