

Published based on [What Is Gout and the Four Stages of Progression](#)

# **What Is Gout and the Four Stages of Progression**

**W**hat is gout is a question usually asked by a first time sufferers of this disease. To begin with gout is a form of arthritis translated; arthritis means joint inflammation. Arthritis is a number of conditions that causes damage to the joints of the body. Gouty arthritis is caused by the build up of uric acid crystals in the joints, causing inflammation. Gout accounts for approximately 5 percent of all cases of arthritis. This disease can progress through four stages:

**Asymptomatic** (without symptoms) [hyperuricemia](#) – In this stage, a person has elevated levels of uric acid in the blood (hyperuricemia), but no other symptoms. Treatment is usually not required.

**Acute gout**, or acute gouty arthritis – In this stage, hyperuricemia is responsible for the deposit of uric acid crystals in joint areas. This leads to a sudden onset of intense pain and swelling in the joints, which also may be warm and very tender to the touch. An acute attack commonly occurs at night and can be triggered by stressful events, alcohol or drugs, or the presence of another illness. Attacks usually subside within 3 to 10 days, even without treatment, and the next attack may not occur for months or even years. Over time, however, attacks can last longer and occur more frequently.

**Interval or intercritical gout** – This is the period between acute attacks. In this stage, a person does not have any symptoms of gout. At this stage of the disease a person sometimes becomes complacent and stops inquiring about **what is gout**, unaware of the dangers of the fourth stage of this disease.

**Chronic tophaceous gout** – This is the most disabling stage of gout. It usually develops over a long period, such as 10 years. In this stage, the disease may have caused permanent damage to the affected joints and sometimes to the kidneys. With proper treatment, most people with gout do not progress to this advanced stage.

At present there is no cure for gout. The first line of defense against gout should always be to consult your doctor. With the correct diagnoses and treatment gout is preventable. Don't wait until your first attack to ask ***what is gout?*** Discover what is available for [gout relief](#) starting today.

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