

# Treating The Pain Of Gout Flares


(NAPSA)—If you ever suffer from gout, you'll know that the disease is characterized by sudden, intense, burning pain as well as swelling, redness, warmth and joint stiffness, most often in the big toe. Gout sufferers usually experience pain from two sources: the formation of uric acid crystals inside the joint that cause pain when the joint is moved; and inflammation of tissues around the joint, which often causes the skin to be swollen, tender and sore at even the slightest touch. In fact, for some patients, a blanket or a light sheet draped over the affected area can cause excruciating pain.

## Gout Treatments

Dietary changes, including avoiding protein-rich foods such as meat and shellfish and limiting alcohol intake, can be helpful to reduce the occurrence of gout attacks. Sometimes, your doctor may feel that prescription drugs are necessary to relieve the pain of gout flares and prevent future attacks. So how do you know what treatment is best? Your doctor will be aware of the various treatment options that exist for gout. Current prescription treatments include medicines that can relieve or prevent gout flares and drugs that lower the body's uric acid levels (high levels are known to cause gout attacks). While your doctor is the best judge of the right treatments for you, options include:

• **Colchicine:** The fact that colchicine has been a cornerstone of gout treatment for hundreds of years is testament to its effectiveness. High doses, however, can be toxic. A new form of colchicine, known as COLCRYS® (colchicine, USP), was recently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the prevention and treatment of acute gout flares. COLCRYS marks a major improvement over older forms of colchicine that never received FDA approval. COLCRYS was evaluated in clinical trials and

## Some Gout Treatments

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- **NSAIDs, or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as ibuprofen.** These are available over the counter and can help control inflammation and pain.
- **Corticosteroids:** These drugs are often used in patients who cannot take colchicine or NSAIDs. They may provide rapid relief of gout symptoms but are usually prescribed only for a short period of time.
- **Uric acid-lowering agents control the buildup of uric acid levels in your blood.** 

was shown to be effective at relieving acute gout flares within a 24-hour period with significantly fewer side effects than unapproved, high-dose colchicine regimens.

• **NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs):** NSAIDs help control inflammation and pain. NSAIDs such as ibuprofen are available over the counter. Aspirin is not indicated for gout, as it may raise the level of uric acid in your blood.

• **Corticosteroids:** These drugs may provide rapid relief of gout symptoms and may be given intravenously, orally or as an injection. Corticosteroids are often used in patients who cannot take colchicine or NSAIDs and are usually prescribed only for a short time.

Other medications may be prescribed by your doctor to keep gout attacks at bay. Uric acid-lowering (UAL) agents, for instance, are often prescribed as a preventive treatment for gout. These treatments control the buildup of uric acid levels in your blood.

## Side Effects Of Gout Drugs

It is important to always alert your doctor to any side effects you

may be experiencing with your current treatments. Keep in mind that no treatments are without side effects. Gastrointestinal conditions such as stomachache, vomiting and diarrhea are possible with NSAIDs and colchicine. Uric acid-lowering agents such as allopurinol may lower blood cell counts and cause drowsiness. Probenecid, a drug that helps the body eliminate uric acid, may cause stomachache, headache or sore gums. You may experience other side effects, depending on your treatment regimen.

**Important Safety Information:** COLCRYS (colchicine, USP) tablets are indicated for the prophylaxis and treatment of acute gout flares in adults.

COLCRYS is contraindicated in patients with renal or hepatic impairment who are concurrently prescribed P-gp inhibitors or strong inhibitors of CYP3A4, as life-threatening or fatal toxicity has been reported. The most common adverse events in clinical trials for the prophylaxis and treatment of gout were diarrhea and pharyngolaryngeal pain. Rarely, myelosuppression, thrombocytopenia and leukopenia have been reported in patients taking colchicine. Rhabdomyolysis has been occasionally observed, especially when colchicine is prescribed in combination with other drugs known to cause this effect. Monitoring is recommended for patients with a history of blood dyscrasias or rhabdomyolysis.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch) or call (800) FDA-1088.

You may also report negative side effects to the manufacturer of COLCRYS by calling (888) 351-3786. See [www.colcrys.com](http://www.colcrys.com) for full Prescribing Information.

If you or a loved one has symptoms of gout, talk to a health care professional and visit [www.colcrys.com](http://www.colcrys.com).