

# FOODS TO AVOID IF YOU HAVE HIGH URIC ACID LEVEL

## Scallops

Cut back on seafood and meat during a flare-up

These animal foods are rich in purines, which your body breaks down into uric acid. You have a little more freedom in your food choices when your gout is at bay, but it's still a good idea to keep meat and seafood intake to a minimum—4 to 6 ounces daily at most.

Scallops and salmon are okay for an occasional indulgence.

## Herring and Shellfish

Whereas some types of seafood can be eaten once in a while, others should be off the menu completely for those who have gout.

Avoid herring, tuna, and anchovies, shrimp, lobster, and crab for example.

## Beer

Drinking beer is a double-whammy for gout-prone folks, Dr. Zashin says. Not only does it increase your uric-acid level, beer also makes it more difficult for your body to clear this substance from your system.

Wine is a better choice, but heavy drinking is a bad idea for everyone, and people who get gout are no exception, says Sandon, who is a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association. During a flare, doctors will usually recommend that you abstain from alcohol entirely.

## Red meat

All meat is not created equal when it comes to purine content. White meat is generally better than red, but it is okay to eat some types of red meat once in a while.

You're a bit better off if your occasional indulgence is beef or pork rather than turkey or lamb, says Dr. Zashin.

And lamb chops are a better choice than leg meat.

## Turkey

Turkey and goose are higher in purines than other types of food, so it's best to avoid them. And gout-prone people should also keep their intake of wild game to a minimum.

Chicken and duck are the safest choices, according to Dr. Zashin. However, leg meat is a better choice than a chicken breast with skin.

## Sugary drinks

Avoid beverages sweetened with high-fructose corn syrup, such as non-diet sodas or “fruit” drinks.

Downing these drinks isn’t just an easy way to pack on pounds; the sweeteners will stimulate the body to produce more uric acid.

A study found that men who consumed lots of fructose were at higher risk of developing gout; in 2010 that same research team reported that drinking fructose-sweetened drinks every day, compared with consuming less than one drink a month, upped women’s gout risk too.

## Asparagus

Asparagus, cauliflower, spinach, and mushrooms are higher in purines than other vegetables. But if you like these foods, there’s no reason to avoid them completely, says Sandon.

“Certainly you wouldn’t want to go wild with these high-purine vegetables, but they don’t seem to be an issue like the meats are,” she adds.

Veggie-rich diets actually help you clear purines from the body, according to Sandon, while the body seems to have an easier time excreting purines from vegetable sources.

## Liver

Organ meats, such as liver, kidneys, and sweetbreads, are a major no-no.