

Treatment of Gout – the Ayurvedic way

Ayurveda suggests that primarily an excess of ama and lack of Agni cause gout. Poor digestion and a weakened colon, resulting in accumulation of undigested food and the build up of waste matter, can cause this. Poor digestion allows toxins to accumulate in the body and problems with the colon allow the toxins to reach the joints. One way, therefore, to treat gout is to stimulate the digestive fire (agni) and suppress the ama.

It is vital to diagnose which type of gout you have as Ayurveda distinguishes three categories corresponding to vata, pitta and kapha.

Depending on a person's lifestyle, diet and emotional constitution, vata, pitta or kapha goes out of balance. Then that particular dosha slows down agni resulting in the toxic, sticky by product of inadequate digestion known as ama.

Gout can be different for people depending on their body types.

Vata gout is the most common type of gout and is seen when there is an excess of vata, usually from the colon. This settles in the joints accompanied by *ama* or toxins. The autoimmune system is triggered off and this attacks the joint surfaces. This results in pain, dryness and stiffness.

Treatment: Take hot baths and massaging yourself or having an Abyhanga Ayurvedic massage with 20% Mahanarayan oil such as Sesame oil will help although the oil may have a strong smell associated with it. Coolherbals Aching Muscles and Joint Massage oil would help too and the smell is pleasant too! It is made with Oil of Wintergreen and menthol. Menthol opens the blood vessels and the oil of wintergreen warms up the

skin and is a natural pain killer.. Putting in will fortify the massaging oil. Herbs, in the form of capsules, such as Boswellia (Indian Frankincense) and Commiphore mukul(guggula) taken three times a day will help as anti-inflammatory, pain killing and to strengthen bones and improve flexibility. A herb Triphala will help in keeping the colon clean. It is recommended that dairy foods and nightshade foods such as potato and eggplant be avoided and to follow an anti-vata diet. Fruits such as cherries may help. See www.ayurvedainstitute.org for further dietary advice. If however heat aggravates the pain it may well be a Pitta type of gout.

Pitta gout is seen when there is heat, swelling or a burning sensation. It starts with excess Pitta or heat in the body and the accumulation of acid by-products of metabolism overflow from the intestine. These have moved through circulation to the joints.

Treatment: Cool compresses and massaging yourself or having an Abyhanga Ayurvedic massage with oils such as coconut oil help reduce symptoms. To strengthen the oil 20% Khsheerbala oil may be added to the coconut oil. A 5-7 day detoxification diet and an anti-pitta diet of cool, slightly dry and heavy foods would help. If cool compresses aggravate the pain the gout may be either Vata or Kapha type. Herbs such as Boswellia and Commiphora Mukul, one capsule three times a day would help. Use ice bag for cooling.

Kapha gout starts with build up in the lungs and sinuses causing a slow down of digestion and metabolism and blockage of the elimination of *ama*. Gout symptoms witnessed are dull ache, congestion and swelling.

Treatment: Have hot baths, compresses or massage yourself or have an Abyhanga Ayurvedic massage with massage oils such as Almond oil help. A 20% solution of Sahacharadi oil can be added for a stronger oil. Dry heat such as sauna helps. A one to two week detoxification diet would also help. (Please note that if you are on blood pressure or blood thinning medication you should seek medical advice before taking these capsules as the herb Commiphore Mukul can reduce blood pressure). An anti-kapha diet, foods that are light, dry and warm would be recommended. Hot herbs such as dry

ginger, turmeric and cinnamon would be helpful. As with other types of Gout herbs such as Boswellia and Commiphora Mukul, one capsule three times a day may help. If heat aggravates the pain then it may well be a Pitta complaint.

Written by Ravi Bhanot, an Ayurvedic Researcher, Homoeopath and Nutritionist with The Ayurveda Institute of Europe.

For a diet sheet or for an Ayurvedic Massage Therapist near your area or for more information to learn Ayurvedic massages or herbs mentioned please write to The Ayurveda Institute of Europe, 386 Green Lane, Ilford, Essex IG3 9JU, Email: info@ayurvedainstitute.org or phone 020 8270 0533 or visit www.ayurvedainstitute.org.