

Cases of Gout Increase

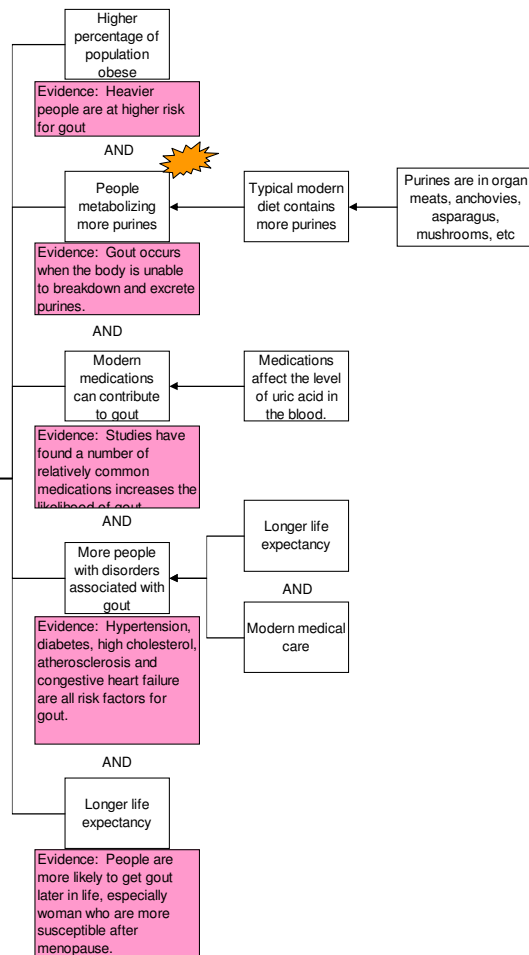
USA
2011

Gout was historically known as "the disease of kings" or "rich man's disease" and has long been associated with rich food and excessive rich, but recently gout has become a common problem across socio-economic classes. More than six million adults in the US have gout and the number will likely keep rising in the future.

Public Health Goal Impacted

Number of gout cases increasing
More people at risk for gout

The modern diet contains more purines. This has contributed to the number of gout cases.



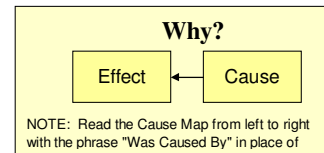
Gout occurs when there are high levels of uric acid in the blood stream. Excessive uric acid forms crystals that collect in joints and soft tissues, causing acute pain and inflammation. Uric acid is produced when the body processes purines. Purines are found naturally within the body and are also found in many types of food, including meat (especially organ meat), anchovies, herring, asparagus and mushrooms.

Why are more people suffering from gout?

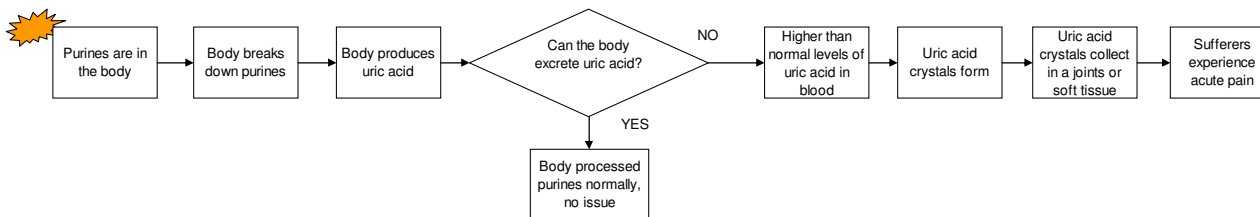
Digging through some of the data available, it becomes clear that the modern diet is one cause, but there are a number of other causes that contribute to gout including higher life expectancy, higher weights, and modern medications. Risk of gout is also higher for people who suffer from a number of illnesses, including hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol and congestive heart failure; all diseases which are more common now than they were in the past thanks to advances in modern medicine and increased life expectancy. Obesity also makes gout more likely and today's population is heavier on average. There are also several medications that have been shown to increase the risk of gout, including medicines commonly used to treat high blood pressure and low-dose aspirin.

Gout has typically been considered a man's disease, but now more women are suffering from it. Prior to menopause, woman naturally have lower levels of uric acid in their blood, but as women live longer more cases of gout are developing in women.

Looking at the risk factors associated with gout, it's clear why more and more people are suffering from it. Some risk factors can't be changed, such as gender or age, but staying healthy overall can reduce the likelihood of suffering from gout.



Process Map - Gout



Cause Map High Level

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