

Patient Patient

With **DAVE ARNTSEN**

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Q When did you first realize you had gout?

As a child, I witnessed my father experiencing gout attacks. I never thought I would also live with the disease.

I had my first gout attack 30 years ago, followed by a few other attacks that would happen periodically. I thought they were isolated events.

But after three years I started having attacks once or twice a year. That's when I knew I had to do something.

Q What has helped you manage your gout?

My experience with gout changed dramatically after I decided to see a gout specialist, a rheumatologist. I started on medication, allopurinol.

Improving my diet and lifestyle also helped. I started eating less shellfish and more lean meats, and I cut out alcohol.

I still take medication, and my uric acid levels are now completely under control. I can play golf and do all the things I want with no fear of gout attacks.

Q Did the COVID-19 pandemic change how you approached gout management?

The COVID-19 pandemic motivated me to start living a healthier life. In addition to gout, I was overweight, and I was dealing with high blood pressure and diabetes on top of that. I knew if I contracted COVID-19 at the shape I was in back in March 2020, I might not survive.

So I really buckled down and changed how I was living. Since then, I've lost 50 pounds and have been able to stop taking my medications for high blood pressure and all but one of my medications for control of type 2 diabetes.

Q How have family and friends responded to you having gout?

Because my father had gout, I always had someone who understood what

I was going through. I was lucky in that respect. I think support and encouragement are important for someone who's learning to live with gout.

Fortunately, I haven't experienced any negative reactions when I tell people I have gout. If anything, many people don't know what gout is when I tell them. That's provided an opportunity to educate others on what gout is.

Q What advice would you offer someone struggling with gout?

See a rheumatologist. General practitioners can be a good first step, but gout specialists are the best people to treat you when you're living with this disease.

And for anyone who's hesitant to take medication, I would tell them there is nothing to be afraid of. My medication helped me get gout under control, and that's been life changing.

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Gout Awareness

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