

## Gout Defense: Eat Cherries?

Editorial Staff

Gout is a common form of inflammatory arthritis (the most common form affecting men), characterized by overproduction or underexcretion of uric acid, which results in the buildup of uric acid crystals in tissues and fluids. During acute episodes, gout sufferers experience red, hot, swollen joints with accompanying severe pain.

While medication, particularly nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, is the hallmark treatment option for acute flare-ups, recent evidence suggests cherries may offer a more natural way of managing the condition. In a study published in *Arthritis and Rheumatology*, 633 individuals with gout were tracked for one year, answering periodic questions regarding gout attacks, symptoms / signs, medications taken, and intake of cherries and/or cherry extract during the two days prior to the attack.

Researchers assessed the same exposure information over two-day control periods and then estimated the recurrent risk of gout episodes relative to cherry intake. Analysis revealed cherry consumption within the two-day window was associated with a 35 percent lower risk of gout attacks compared to no cherry intake. Cherry extract intake "showed a similar inverse association," according to researchers.

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