

Low-Purine Diet

*University of
Pittsburgh
Medical Center
Information
for Patients*

Purines (PYUR-eenz) are found in many foods, especially organ meats, anchovies, mackerel, and sardines. Purines make up 15 percent of the uric acid found in the body. Too much uric acid can lead to problems, including kidney stones and gout. For this reason, a low-purine diet is recommended for people who have kidney stones, gout, and sometimes for people who have had an organ transplant. The diet is often used with medication to lower uric acid levels. Some people can lower their uric acid levels through diet alone.

Not everyone needs to follow a rigid diet to treat gout, but avoiding foods that are high in purines may help. Check with your doctor or dietitian to see if you should follow this diet.

Important points to keep in mind

- **Avoid high-purine foods.** See attached lists.
- **Avoid or limit alcohol.** Alcohol increases purine production, leading to higher uric acid levels in your blood and urine.
- **Limit meat to 3 ounces per meal.**
- **Limit high-fat foods** such as salad dressings, ice cream, fried foods, gravies, and dressings. Fat holds onto uric acid in your kidneys.
- **Eat enough carbohydrates.** They help your body get rid of extra uric acid.
- **If you are overweight, lose weight gradually.** Rapid weight loss can increase uric acid levels.
- **Drink 8 to 12 cups of fluid every day** to help reduce kidney stone formation.
- **Don't take baker's or brewer's yeast** as a supplement.

continued

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Breads, Cereals, Rice, and Pasta	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
6-11 servings each day <i>Serving size =</i> 1 slice bread, 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal, 1/2 cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all enriched breads, cereals, rice, noodles, pasta, and potatoes - limit to 2 servings per week: whole-grain breads and cereals, wheat germ, bran, and oatmeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - limit high-fat breads like pancakes, French toast, biscuits, muffins, and french fries

Fruit	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
2-4 servings each day <i>Serving size =</i> 1 medium-size piece of fresh fruit, 1/2 cup canned fruit, 3/4 cup fruit juice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all fruit and juices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - limit avocados (high in fat)

Milk and Dairy Products	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
2 servings each day <i>Serving size =</i> 1 cup milk or yogurt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - skim or low-fat milk - low-fat yogurt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whole milk, cream, and sour cream

Vegetables	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
3 servings each day <i>Serving size =</i> 1 cup raw, 1/2 cup cooked or chopped	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all - limit to 2 servings per week: mushrooms, dried peas and beans, spinach, asparagus, cauliflower 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - limit high-fat cooking, including au gratin, fried foods, and cream sauces

Meats, Poultry, Fish, Dried Beans, Peas, Eggs, and Cheese	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
<p>Total of 6 ounces daily <i>Serving size =</i> 2-3 ounces cooked (Count 1 egg, 1/2 cup cooked beans, 2 tablespoons peanut butter, or 1 ounce of cheese as 1 ounce of meat.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - beef, lamb, veal, pork, poultry, fish, eggs, peanut butter, nuts, and low-fat cheese - limit to 2 servings per week: dried peas and beans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sweetbreads, anchovies, sardines, liver, kidneys, brains, meat extracts, herring, mackerel, scallops, gravies, goose, heart, mincemeat, and mussels

Fats, Condiments, and Drinks	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - salt, herbs, spices, and condiments - carbonated drinks, coffee, cocoa, and tea - soups made with low-fat milk and vegetable-based broth - limit to 3 teaspoons daily: butter, margarine, oils, and mayonnaise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - meat gravies, baker's and brewer's yeast, alcohol, and meat stock-based soups (such as bouillon, broth, and consomme)

Snacks, Sweets, and Desserts	Foods to Choose	Foods to Avoid
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gelatin, ice milk, vanilla wafers, angel food cake - low-fat frozen yogurt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - high-fat desserts such as ice cream, cookies, cakes, pies, doughnuts, and chocolate - mincemeat pie

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