

Difference between gout and Rheumatoid arthritis (RA)



Background: Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and gout are both categories of arthritis, but the causes, symptoms and long-term effects are different. A person with RA may have a higher risk of developing gout than a person without it, possibly because they share some risk factors. RA is an autoimmune condition and body's immune system mistakenly attacks the healthy cells in the lining of the joints, which causes pain, inflammation and swelling. Gout is also an inflammatory disorder, but it is not an autoimmune condition. Instead, a person develops gout because of high levels of uric acid in the blood. Uric acid crystals can deposit in the synovial tissues, especially in the hands, feet and elbows.

Symptoms: Below are some symptoms to differentiate both the conditions:

Rheumatoid arthritis	Gout
Pain can be mild, moderate or severe	Redness, swelling and intense pain
Pain associated with stiffness	No stiffness present
It can affect any joint at a time	It can affect single joint at a time
It involves both larger and smaller joints	It involves only small joint- like big toe
Pain episode is increasing, if left untreated	Pain occurs in intermittent episode

Causes and risk factors: RA results from a problem with the immune system, though researches have not been able to comment on why this occurs in some people and not others. Individuals with the following risk factors are more likely to experience RA:

- **Age:** RA usually appears when a person is in their 60s, though it can happen at any age.
 - **Gender:** It is two to three times more common in females than males.
 - **Genetics:** Having specific genetic features can make it more likely to develop.
 - **Body mass:** People with obesity are more likely to have RA.
 - **Smoking:** Smoking or exposure to cigarette smoke or nicotine-containing products before birth can increase risk
 - **History of giving birth:** Those who have never given birth may have a higher risk.
- Gout occurs when a person's body builds up excess amounts of uric acid. Some people naturally produce excess uric acid, which can make gout more likely. People with the following risk factors are more likely to experience uric acid build-up and gout:
- **Gender:** It is more common in males.
 - **Health conditions:** A history of high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, kidney problems, and other aspects of metabolic syndrome make gout more likely.
 - **Medications:** Taking medications such as diuretics or "water pills" can increase the risk.
 - **Drinks:** A high consumption of alcohol and drinks high in fructose, a type of sugar, can increase the risk.
 - **Food:** Foods containing purines can raise uric acid levels; eg. red meat and some seafood.
 - **Body mass:** Having obesity is a risk factor.

Diagnosis: To diagnose RA or gout, a doctor will carry out a physical examination and ask for:

- Medical history, including family history and any other chronic conditions
- Symptoms and where they are in the body
- Dietary habits

A doctor will also order blood testing. A uric acid test can help identify gout. Other biomarkers may help indicate if a person has RA. They include:

- Anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide (Anti CCP)
- C-reactive protein and ESR (erythrocyte sedimentation rate)
- Rheumatoid factor

Imaging tests, such as X-ray and MRI scans, can detect:

- Damage to soft tissue or bone
- A build-up of uric acid crystals around the joints
- Signs of inflammation around the joint

Your treating doctor may use a needle to remove fluid from a swollen joint to test for the presence of uric acid crystals that may indicate gout.

Source:

Medical News Today



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Difference between gout and...
Rheumatoid arthritis...



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