

Low Purine Diet

Limiting purines to manage uric acid, gout, and uric acid kidney stones.

Purines are compounds found in many foods. Your body breaks them down into uric acid, which the kidneys normally clear. When uric acid builds up, it can crystallize in the joints — causing gout — or in the kidney, forming uric acid stones.

Why This Matters

Gout and kidney disease travel together, and each worsens the other. Reduced kidney function raises uric acid; high uric acid injures the kidney over time. Diet alone rarely controls uric acid fully — it typically lowers levels modestly — but it reduces attack frequency and works alongside medication. If you have been prescribed allopurinol or febuxostat, keep taking it during an attack unless we tell you otherwise. Stopping and starting these drugs can trigger a flare.

Choose More Often (Lower Purine)	Limit or Avoid (Higher Purine)
Eggs, low-fat dairy, milk and yogurt	Organ meats — liver, kidney, sweetbreads, brain
Most vegetables, including spinach and asparagus	Anchovies, sardines, mackerel, herring, mussels, scallops
Cherries and cherry juice, most fruits	Red meat, especially beef, lamb, pork, venison
Whole grains, rice, pasta, bread	Bacon, gravy, meat extracts, broths and bouillon
Coffee, water, herbal tea	Beer and distilled spirits, high-fructose corn syrup, regular soda
Nuts, peanut butter, legumes in moderation	Yeast and yeast extracts, brewer's yeast supplements

Beer and Sugary Drinks Are Worse Than Steak

- Beer is a double hit — high in purines AND it blocks the kidney from excreting uric acid.
- High-fructose corn syrup raises uric acid directly. Regular soda and sweetened juices are a common trigger.
- Spirits raise uric acid too. Wine is less strongly associated but is not free.

Ignore the Old Advice About Vegetables

- Spinach, asparagus, mushrooms, and cauliflower were restricted for decades.
- The evidence does not support it — plant purines do not raise gout risk the way animal purines do.
- Eat the vegetables. Low-fat dairy actually appears protective.

Weight Loss Helps — But Not Crash Dieting

- Gradual weight loss lowers uric acid. Rapid loss or fasting raises it and can trigger an attack.
- Aim for steady, moderate loss rather than aggressive restriction.
- Stay well hydrated — dilute urine reduces uric acid stone formation.

Questions

Every patient is different. The right targets for you depend on your kidney function, your other medical conditions, and your medications. Bring this guide to your next visit and ask us what applies to you. Call **949-642-4974** with questions between visits.