

Women with gout at greater risk of heart attack than men

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Women with gout are at greater risk of a heart attack than men with the disease, indicates research published ahead of print in the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*.

Gout is known to boost the risk of a heart attack in men. But to date, little has been known about the impact of [gout](#) on women's cardiovascular health.

Gout is common and caused by inflammation in the joints as a result of excess [uric acid](#) deposits. Uric acid is a by-product of purines, which are abundant in a Western diet.

Obesity, weight gain, high alcohol intake, [high blood pressure](#), poorly functioning kidneys and certain drugs can all precipitate its development.

The authors base their findings on a population study of more than 9500 gout patients and 48, 000 people without the disease, aged 65 and older.

All participants were drawn from the Canadian British Columbia Linked Health Database, which covers the entire province of British Columbia (population 4.5 million) and contains long term information on healthcare use.

The cardiovascular health of all the participants was tracked for an average of seven years, during which time 3268 fatal and non-fatal heart attacks occurred. Of these, just under a third (996) were in women.

Compared with women who did not have gout, those who did were 39% more likely to have a heart attack of any kind and 41% more likely to have a non-fatal heart attack.

The risks were significantly higher among the women than among the men. Men with gout were only 11% more likely than those without the disease to have a fatal or non-fatal [heart attack](#).

The findings held true after adjusting for factors likely to influence the results, such as age, other underlying health problems, and use of [prescription drugs](#).

The authors comment that excess uric acid may boost levels of inflammation and platelet stickiness, both of which are implicated in coronary artery [heart disease](#). Other forms of arthritis also boost the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Provided by British Medical Journal

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