Dual-energy CT may be useful in evaluating the severity of gout, study suggests

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The incidence of gout is on the rise and duel energy CT has the potential to allow non-invasive diagnosis of the disease, according to radiologists at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver General Hospital, in Vancouver, BC.

Gout is caused by the deposition of monosodium urate (MSU) monohydrate crystals that stimulate acute episodes of inflammation. Chronic tophaceous gout often presents as juxtarticular soft-tissue masses, distinct erosions, overhanging bony margins, and thickening of the synovium. Gout affects more than six million people in the U.S., and "a non-invasive means of diagnosing gout would be highly desirable," said Khalid Khashoggi, MD, one of the authors of the study

"Dual-energy CT can detect monosodium urate in different tissues in the body, which will have a huge impact on the understanding of gout and will help in detecting subclinical cases and will allow monitoring response to treatment," said Dr. Khashoggi. "The technology will also help in problem solving in atypical cases of gout," he said.

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