

Newspapers often publish false depictions of gout

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A new analysis reveals that popular newspaper articles depict gout as a self-inflicted condition that is socially embarrassing and the focus of humor.

Specifically, social embarrassment due to [gout](#) was reported in 27 of 114 (23.7%) articles in the 21 highest circulation newspapers in the United Kingdom and United States between 2010 and 2015. Jokes or humorous references to gout were reported in 30 of the 114 articles (26.3%).

In addition, dietary solutions were over-emphasized compared with effective medication.

"Research in the last few decades has demonstrated that gout has a strong biological basis, with the kidney playing a central role, and effective long-term treatment is available," said Professor Nicola Dalbeth, senior author of the *Arthritis Care & Research* study. "The [social embarrassment](#) and self-blame discourse that occurs around gout may have important consequences, making people with gout less likely to seek help to avoid being the [focus](#) of jokes and social shaming."

More information: Stefanie D Duyck et al, "You don't have to be a drinker to have gout, but it helps†": A content analysis of the depiction of gout in popular newspapers, *Arthritis Care & Research* (2016). [DOI: 10.1002/acr.22879](https://doi.org/10.1002/acr.22879)

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