Ouch?

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It’s not an ancient ailment: Gout affects 2.1 million Americans, says the Arthritis Foundation. And black men are twice as likely to have it as their white counterparts.

Just ask former NBA player Maurice Cheeks, now the Philadelphia 76ers’ head coach. He first met the painful arthritic condition at age 46. “I had some tough injuries in my playing career,” Cheeks says, “but never anything as painful as gout. My public struggles with gout have shown me the widespread misperceptions about this condition. People don’t understand how painful and debilitating gout can be.”

Gout is caused by uric acid crystals collecting in joints (often the base of the big toe). Symptoms include tenderness, pain, swelling and shiny red or purple skin around the joint.

Commonly treated with medication and dietary changes, a gout attack may be triggered by an elevated level of uric acid in the blood. Culprits include obesity, alcohol and foods such as sardines, organ meats (liver, kidneys, etc.) and legumes (dried beans, soybeans, peas).

To help flush uric acid crystals out of the body, try drinking 10 to 12 8-ounce glasses of water daily.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/gout-arthritis-16196-6194