


# LENI DOESN'T HAVE GOUT ATTACKS ANYMORE



Hey, Leni you're eating mussels - you'll get gout.

A comic illustration showing two men sitting at a table eating mussels. The man on the left is wearing a white t-shirt and yellow shorts, looking concerned. The man on the right is wearing a white tank top with red numbers and green shorts, looking calm. They are both holding plates of mussels and using forks and knives. The background is a simple green gradient.

Nah, I can eat kaimoana now. My gout was caused by my kidneys stopping my body getting rid of uric acid. I am taking pills everyday to keep my uric acid down.


For most people gout is caused by their kidneys not food

## This is what I have learnt about my gout:

- I got really painful gout attacks because my kidneys held onto too much uric acid instead of getting rid of it when I went to the toilet.
- Food, especially kaimoana doesn't cause gout.
- Gout is not my fault. For some people, especially Māori and Pacific people, gout is caused by our genes and how our kidneys work.
- Even when I didn't have gout attacks, I still had gout because my uric acid was too high.



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Joe tells me that Leni doesn't have gout any more – he is taking pills everyday and doesn't get gout.

Oh it has made such a difference – he doesn't get those really painful gout attacks any more. He doesn't need me to help him with all sorts of things. He is going to work all the time. He is having fun with the boys. He is just so much happier. He wishes he had started taking the pills so much earlier.

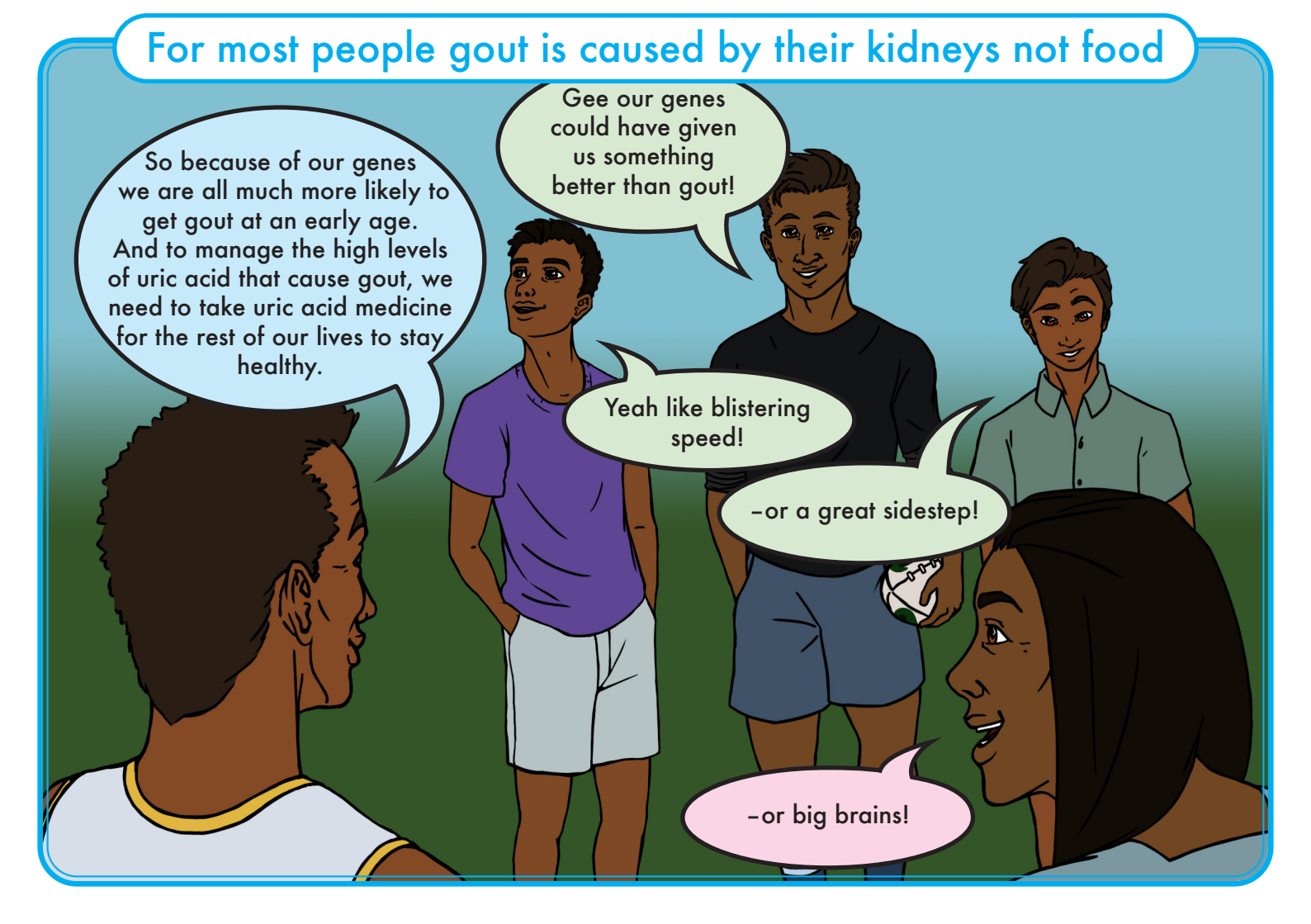
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## This is what I have learnt about gout:

- Food, especially kaimoana doesn't cause gout.
- Gout is not the person's fault. For some people, especially Māori and Pacific people, gout is caused by our genes and how our kidneys work.
- I need to support Leni to take his pills every day so he keeps his uric acid down under .36.
- Leni and I need to talk to our boys so they know if they get gout, it is because of their genes and they will need to take medicine long term for their health.



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So because of our genes we are all much more likely to get gout at an early age. And to manage the high levels of uric acid that cause gout, we need to take uric acid medicine for the rest of our lives to stay healthy.

Gees our genes could have given us something better than gout!

Yeah like blistering speed!

-or a great sidestep!

-or big brains!

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## This is what we have learnt about gout:

- Gout is caused by genes.
- We are likely to get gout at a younger age.
- When we get our first gout attack we need to talk to a GP about starting to take uric acid medicine.
- We need to take uric acid medicine for life and that is ok because it keeps us healthy.
- In the meantime we can keep active, not drink fizzy drinks, eat healthy food and stay a healthy weight.



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Hey Leni can you help me - I have had a gout attack for weeks now. I can't take any more of the pain meds because they are hurting my stomach. My boss has told me I am going to lose my job because I've had so much time off work.

Sounds hard bro. What do you want to do?

I want to keep my job - I need to look after my family

You know you will need to take medicine every day for the rest of your life to stay healthy. It is a big decision.

Whatever it takes - I am so sick of this!



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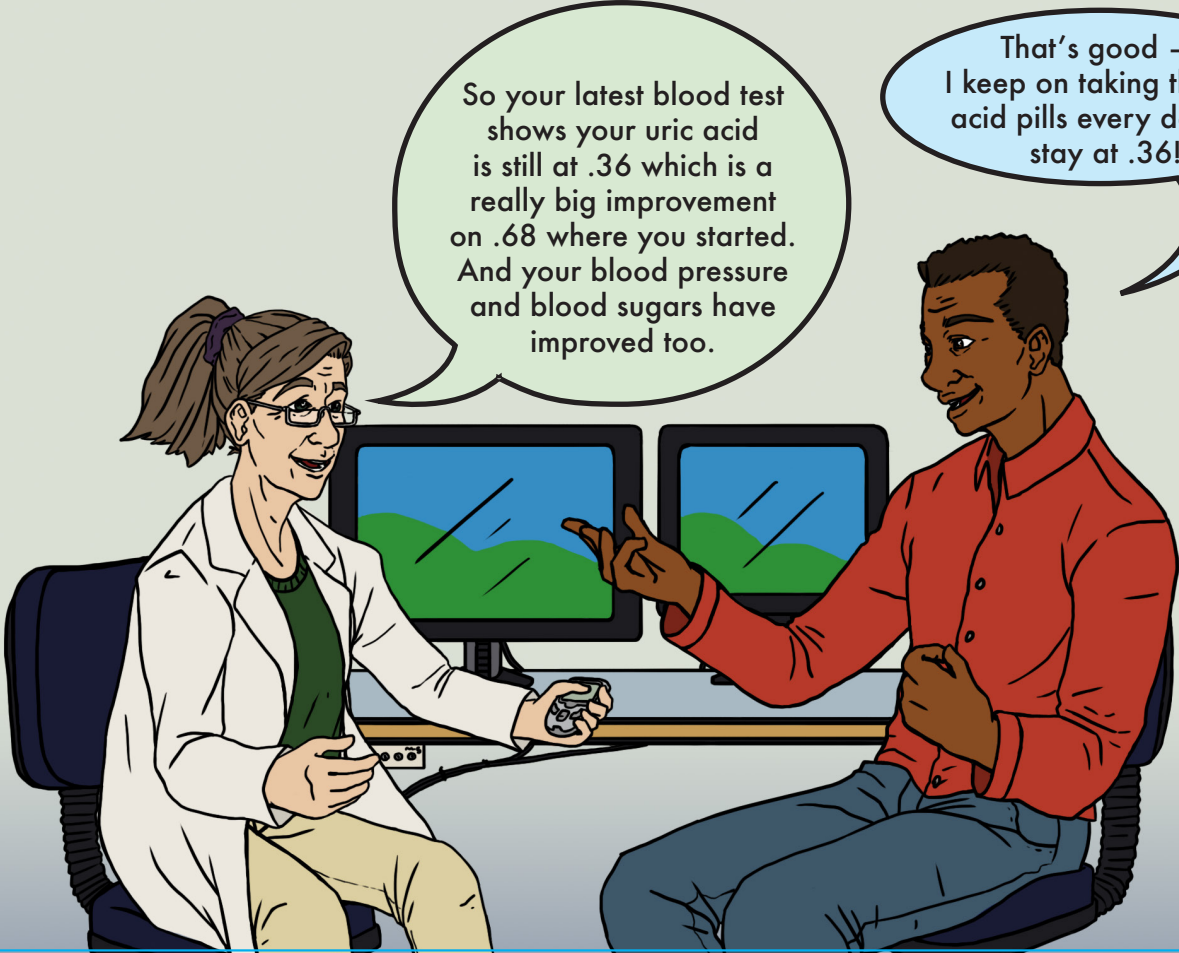
## Here is what Leni told me about getting his gout sorted:

- He talked to his GP about wanting to take uric acid medicine.
- It took some months to get the uric acid medicine to the right dose to bring his uric acid levels down to .36 so he needed to be patient.
- He got two gout attacks while his GP was getting his dose of uric acid medicine right. His GP had told him this could happen, gave him pain medicines and told him to just keep on taking his uric acid medicine.
- Every time he thought he just didn't want to take his pills today he remembered why he was doing this – he wanted to keep his job, make it easier on his wife, and spend time with his kids. Whatever the reasons are, remember them and keep taking those pills.
- And don't be ashamed you are taking medicine every day – you are doing the right thing for you, your family and your health. Good on you bro.





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So your latest blood test shows your uric acid is still at .36 which is a really big improvement on .68 where you started. And your blood pressure and blood sugars have improved too.

That's good - if I keep on taking the uric acid pills every day, I'll stay at .36!

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## What I have learnt from Leni:

- Focus on the link with genes and how that affects the kidneys.
- Don't talk about food and drink – make sure you tell them they are not to blame for getting gout.
- Find out the person's reason for change – what is going to motivate them to keep taking uric acid medicine for the rest of their life.
- Be upfront about how long it might take to get them on the right level of uric acid medicine and that they might have gout attacks during this time.
- If people don't want to take uric acid medicine then keep on having brief conversations with them so it is easy for them to raise it if they change their mind.
- Talk to younger patients whose parents have gout. Tell them that they are likely to get gout and may have to take uric acid medicine at some stage.
- Follow up with patients who are taking uric acid medicine to check they are doing okay.

