

*Dr. Cal D. Baize*

# **Step Ahead Foot & Ankle Clinic**

## Gout

I explained that Gout is a complex disorder that can affect anyone. Men are more likely to have gout than women are, but women become increasingly susceptible to gout after menopause. The signs and symptoms of gout are almost always acute, occurring suddenly often at night and without warning. They include: Intense joint pain, with inflammation and redness. Gout usually affects the large joint of your big toe but can occur in your feet, ankles, knees, hands and wrists. The pain typically lasts five to 10 days and then stops. The discomfort subsides gradually over one to two weeks, leaving the joint apparently normal and pain-free. The cause of gout is from an accumulation of urate crystals. Uric acid is a waste product formed from the breakdown of purines. These are substances found naturally in your body as well as in certain foods, especially organ meats such as liver, brains, kidney and sweetbreads and anchovies, herring, asparagus and mushrooms. Normally, uric acid dissolves in your blood and passes through your kidneys into your urine. But sometimes your body either produces too much or excretes too little of this acid. Uric acid can build up, forming crystals in a joint or surrounding tissue. The medications for treatment of gout include daily medication to stop the attacks from happening different medication to help during the attacks. The medication taken daily called allopurinol may need to be taken for the rest of your life and should not be taken during an acute flair up. I don't like to utilize daily medication until we know how frequent and severe the attacks will be. Other medications are only taken during acute flair ups or at the first signs of gout to abort the symptoms. Yes in cases of extreme damage and pain surgical intervention is to be considered.