

## Quality Control of Gout Treatment - Rheumatology Department HFR

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Master thesis in Medicine

**Objectives:** To analyze the quality of gout treatment in the outpatient clinic of the Rheumatology Department of the HFR Fribourg and the risk factors associated with suboptimal gout control.

**Methods:** Retrospective analysis of patient charts of 74 patients with a diagnosis of gout as well as 77 patients with asymptomatic hyperuricemia treated at the outpatient clinic of the rheumatology department of the HFR Fribourg.

**Results:** Treatment rate for acute gout flare was 86%. Flare prophylaxis was used in 78% of patients and urate lowering therapy (ULT) was introduced in 93% of gouty patients. Even if the treatment protocol seemed to be followed adequately in our department, only 69% of patients achieved target serum uric acid (SUA) levels ( $\leq 360\mu\text{mol/l}$  or  $\leq 300\mu\text{mol/l}$  for patients with tophaceous gout) and 47% were in target for the most recent SUA value. Furthermore 55% of patients failed to remain in target after initially achieving the target SUA levels. Despite our small study population, we found that high initial SUA levels, lack of adequate allopurinol dose escalation and a low number of SUA measurements were factors associated with failure to achieve the target SUA level.

**Conclusion:** Despite a specialist environment and good adherence to treatment protocol, gout treatment at the outpatient clinic of the rheumatology department at HFR Fribourg remains suboptimal with 15 and 55% respectively failing to reach or maintain target SUA levels. In combination with the concluded risk factors for not achieving target SUA of high initial SUA levels, lack of adequate allopurinol dose escalation and low number of SUA measurements, we can conclude that there is a need for a more structured and stricter follow-up plan to allow for a higher rate of target achievement and maintenance.

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