Patient Characteristics and Health-Related Quality of Life Among Controlled and Uncontrolled Gout Patients: Evidence from the MEPS Database

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Objective

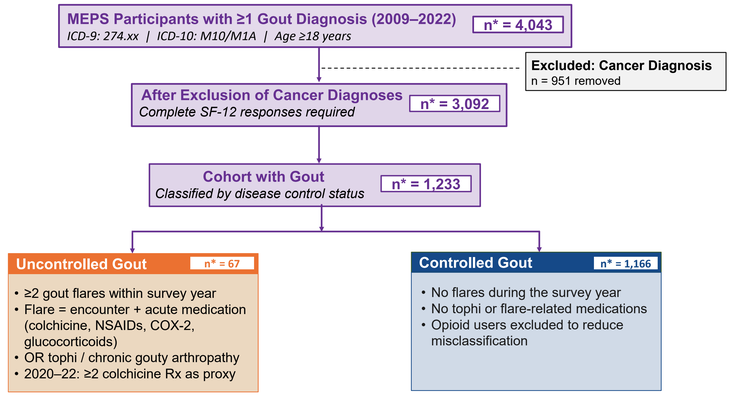
- To describe patient characteristics and compare health-related quality of life (HRQoL) between controlled and uncontrolled gout using the MEPS database

Introduction

- Gout affects 12.1 million U.S. adults (2017–2018)[1] and is the most prevalent inflammatory arthritis in the country; global prevalence is projected to reach 95.8 million by 2050, driven by aging populations, obesity, and comorbidities
- Many patients remain uncontrolled despite available urate-lowering therapies, leading to recurrent flares, joint damage, and impaired function
- HRQoL is substantially reduced in gout, yet nationally representative comparisons between controlled and uncontrolled disease are limited

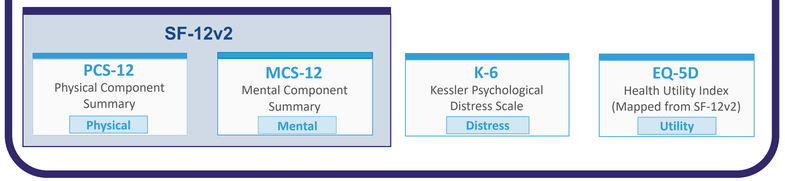
Methods

Design: Cross-sectional observational study
Data Source: MEPS 2009-2022, full-year cross-sectional data only, panel data not used
Statistical method: Survey weights were applied to get national estimates; IPTW was applied for getting more robust HRQoL outcomes



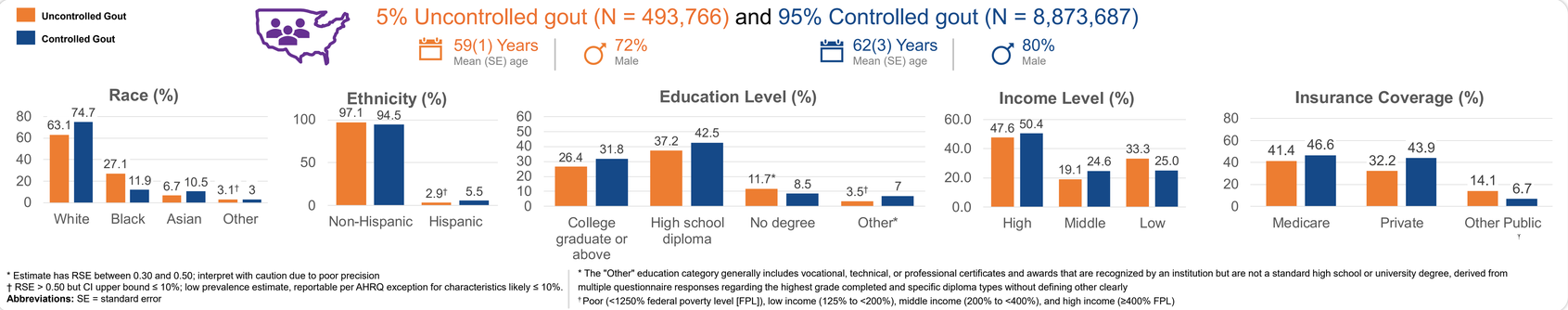
*Unweighted counts

HRQoL Outcomes



Results

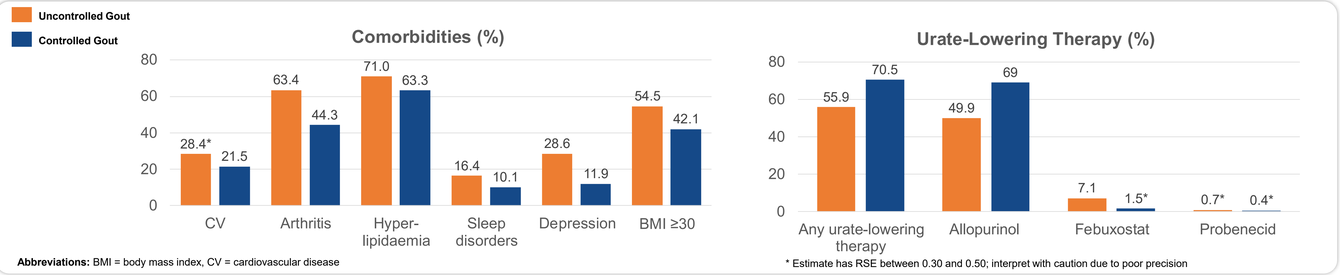
Nationally Representative US Gout Patients – Demographics and Socioeconomic data: 2009–2022



* Estimate has RSE between 0.30 and 0.50; interpret with caution due to poor precision
† RSE > 0.50 but CI upper bound ≤ 10%; low prevalence estimate, reportable per AHRQ exception for characteristics likely ≤ 10%.
Abbreviations: SE = standard error

* The "Other" education category generally includes vocational, technical, or professional certificates and awards that are recognized by an institution but are not a standard high school or university degree, derived from multiple questionnaire responses regarding the highest grade completed and specific diploma types without defining other clearly
† Poor (<1250% federal poverty level [FPL]), low income (125% to <200%), middle income (200% to <400%), and high income (≥400% FPL)

Clinical Comorbidities and Uric Acid Lowering Therapies



Abbreviations: BMI = body mass index, CV = cardiovascular disease

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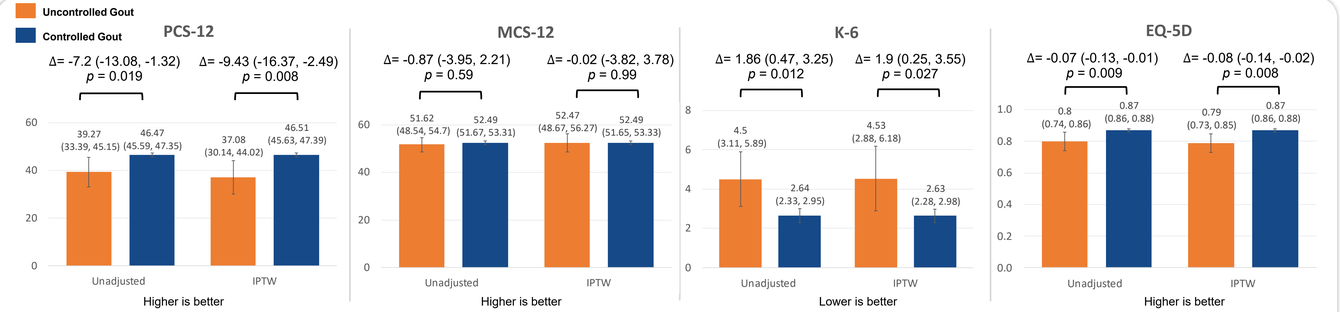
HRQoL and Clinically Meaningful Delta



- Uncontrolled gout was associated with significant decrements in physical functioning (PCS-12) and higher psychological distress (K-6) compared with controlled disease. No significant differences were observed for mental health status (MCS-12) between groups
- EQ-5D utility scores were lower in uncontrolled gout, with reductions of 0.08–0.09 that exceed widely accepted minimally important difference thresholds[2,3]
- These reductions are comparable in size to utility decrements seen in other chronic diseases, indicating a burden on par with major long-term conditions[2,5,6]

Key Takeaways

- From nationally representative U.S. data, adults with uncontrolled gout have worse quality of life than those with controlled disease
- Uncontrolled gout was associated with lower physical health scores and health utility and higher psychological distress.
- Differences remained after adjustment and were large enough to be considered clinically meaningful

Scan the QR code for additional methods, results, limitations, abbreviations, acknowledgments, funding, references, and disclosures.

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