



If you suffer from Raynaud’s why not book yourself a session of reflexology treatments.

Reflexology is based on the principle that there are areas or reflex points on the hands and feet which correspond to every organ and parts of the body helping to balance the body’s systems, stimulating underactive areas and calming overactive ones. It is harmless to those areas functioning correctly. Reflexology will relax your whole body, relieving stress and tension and helping with many conditions.

Reflexology has been shown to help with Raynaud’s. It is a holistic treatment whereby the whole of the body is treated and there are many ways in which it can help in giving relief and respite from all the symptoms. Reflexology helps with circulation to the extremities – hands and feet:

- Cardiovascular, helping to strengthen heart, muscles, valves and veins
- Lungs, helping to give better oxygen supply
- Detoxifying the liver and kidneys
- Helps to rid the body of carbon dioxide and toxins
- Helps to correct imbalance of the endocrine system
- Improving muscle structure

Compare the body to that of the mechanism of a car, when one part of the engine malfunctions then the whole engine will not perform to optimum, so it is important that every working part of the body is working as it should to ensure ultimate performance. Reflexology really can help to fine tune the body.

If you decide to embark on treatments you must ensure that your practitioner is fully qualified and affiliated to a recognised body. There are several very well-known associations in the country and the one that I am registered with is the International Institute of Reflexologists. A directory of all registered practitioners in the country can be found at <http://www.reflexology-uk.net>.

Reflexology is a complementary therapy which means that it sits very well alongside orthodox medicine. It should never be used as a replacement for seeing professional medical advice.

Natural Remedies

There are many different categories of medications which may help with the symptoms of Raynaud's and many people prefer to try natural therapies rather than prescription drugs. All of the therapies suggested below are available over-the-counter in chemists or in health food shops and can be taken at the same time or by themselves.



Please check with your doctor before taking any of the remedies below. The Association does not accept any responsibility for these products.

Vitamins

These are used for their anti-oxidant effect to prevent damage to blood vessels. This is particularly important in patients with scleroderma as blood vessels can become damaged.

- Vitamin E (tocopheryl acetate) - 200mg-400mg -daily. Vitamin E is found naturally in nuts, dark green leafy vegetables, eggs, seafood, avocados.
- Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) - 500mg-1000mg daily. Vitamin C is found naturally in citrus fruits, strawberries, broccoli, tomatoes, capsicum and leafy greens, but it is almost impossible to achieve the high amounts recommended above from diet alone.

Prostacyclin – Stimulating Therapies

By taking **Gamolenic Acid (GLA)** 320mg daily or Omega-3 fish oils you can stimulate your body to produce more prostacyclin, a naturally-occurring substance which helps to protect and repair blood vessels. Evening Primrose Oil contains GLA. The dose of GLA can differ in different Evening Primrose Oil preparations so check the bottle to see how many tablets you need to take 320mg GLA each day.

Maxepa (fish oils) 10,000mg daily (five capsules twice each day).

Omacor (fish oils) 2000mg-4000mg per day (2-4 capsules). Omega-3 fish oils are found naturally in salmon, herring, sardine, mackerel, halibut, walnuts, flaxseed, leafy green vegetables, venison and buffalo.

Most of the above are available on prescription, but your GP may choose not to prescribe them as there is limited published evidence of their effectiveness.

Other Possible Treatments

The following products are supplements and herbs which have not been thoroughly studied or monitored. Scientific evidence is limited and safety and effectiveness may not be proven, however some of our patients have told us they have used these products with some success. You should always read the product label before using.



Ginkgo Biloba up to 240mg daily in three doses. This Chinese herbal remedy has been shown to improve blood flow to the extremities, aiding circulation. Some studies suggest that patients using it experience a significant reduction in their Raynaud's symptoms.

A study of **Seredrin** at the University of Dundee has been reported as having positive results.

Ginger 2000mg-4000mg daily. Capsules usually contain 500mg. It may also be beneficial to add ginger to your diet, to drink ginger tea, or to put a spoonful of ground ginger in your bathing water.

Cayenne - available as powder, capsules or oil.

Hawthorn - available in liquid, leaves or capsules.

Prickly Ash - available in liquid and tincture

Dong Quai - available as a tincture.

Magnesium - available as a powder or capsule.

All the above treatments should be avoided if you are taking warfarin or other blood-thinning agents.

Other Suggestions

The following non-drug treatments have also been recommended by sufferers of Raynaud's Phenomenon:

- **Reflexology** - highly recommend as the treatment helps with circulation to the extremities.
- **Aromatherapy** massage - with oils (e.g. lavender, sandalwood, rose, geranium, rosemary) as suggested by the therapist to aid circulation.
- **Acupuncture** - this may help ease the symptoms of Raynaud's.

Abstracts taken from: www.raynauds.org.uk.