



# Towards Wellness Centre

Providing Solutions To Complex Chronic Health Conditions

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Raynaud's disease is a medical condition in which spasm of arteries cause episodes of reduced blood flow. Typically the fingers, and less commonly the toes are involved. Rarely, the nose, ears, or lips are affected. The episodes result in the affected part turning white and then blue. Often there is numbness or pain. As blood flow returns, the area turns red and burns. In severe cases, loss of blood flow can cause sores or tissue death.

People in colder climates are more likely to develop Raynaud's and it is also more common in women, people with a family history, and those over age 30.

Primary Raynaud's happens on its own. The cause is unknown. There is also secondary Raynaud's, which is caused by injuries, other diseases, or certain medicines.

**Primary Raynaud's or "Raynaud's Disease"** is diagnosed if the symptoms occur by themselves and not in association with other diseases.

**Secondary Raynaud's or "Raynaud's Phenomenon"** occurs secondary to a wide variety of other disorders such as connective tissue disorders, eating disorders, obstructive disorders, drugs side effects, occupations involving vibration or exposure to cold, plus many other diseases and disorders.

Latest on Raynaud's Disease from Medical News Today.

[More info](#)

**Note: Always seek advice from a doctor before beginning any listed treatments, medications or supplements.**

During a Raynaud's attack, the arteries become very narrow for a brief period causing little or no blood flow to affected body parts. This may cause these areas to:

- Turn pale or white and then blue
- Feel numb, cold, or painful
- Turn red, throb, tingle, burn, or feel numb as blood flow returns to the affected areas

Raynaud's attacks can last from seconds to several hours. Attacks can occur daily or weekly.

Attacks often begin in one digit and move to other fingers or toes. Sometimes only one or two fingers or toes are affected. Different areas may be affected at different times.

Severe secondary Raynaud's can cause skin sores or gangrene. Gangrene is the death or decay of body tissue but this is rare.

## Bio Medical Solutions

**Protection through warmth:** Avoiding triggers by staying warm and wearing warm clothes, hats, mittens (rather than gloves), scarf, warm socks and shoes during cold weather. Layer your clothing for extra warmth.

**Avoiding triggers:** such as vibrating tools, wearing proper protective gear when working with chemicals, and limiting repetitive hand actions such as typing. Some medicines can trigger attacks such as migraine headache medicines that contain ergotamin, some cancer medicines, such as cisplatin and vinblastine, some cold or allergy medications, beta blockers and birth control medication.

**Alpha Blockers:** Norepinephrine is a chemical released in the body which constricts blood vessels and alpha blockers such as doxazosin and prazosin counteract some of norepinephrine's actions.

**Calcium Channel Blockers:** such as amlodipine, nifedipine and felodipine are drugs that relax the smaller blood vessels in the hands and feet.

**Vasodilators:** Such as losartan, sildenafil (viagra), fluoxetine (prozac), and prostaglandin are drugs that dilate veins, easing symptoms.

**Nitroglycerin ointment:** applied to the affected area helps to relieve the symptoms by improving blood flow and cardiac output and decreasing blood pressure.

**Nerve surgery:** may decrease either the duration or severity of the attacks, however the procedure is not always successful. The procedure involves the surgeon making small incisions and stripping away the nerves from the blood vessels.

**Chemical injections:** such as Botox or local anesthetics have been found to work well in some patients. Repeat injections are generally required as effectiveness wears off.

**Professional Support:** Working with a trained practitioner can assist you to develop skills to calm anxiety and can also equip you with knowledge to find your next steps towards wellness. Please ensure that you find a practitioner who understands how to navigate the territory of complex chronic health conditions.

[More info](#)

**Gingko Biloba:** is a natural remedy which boosts circulation and may prevent attacks.

## Alternative Solutions

**Omega-3 fatty acids:** found in fish oil, may reduce symptoms in people with primary Raynaud's. High doses of fish oil can increase your risk of bleeding. Patients should consult their doctor before taking it, especially if they already take blood thinners, such as warfarin (Coumadin), clopidogrel (Plavix), or aspirin.

**Evening primrose oil (EPO):** contains a different type of fatty acid that stops the body from making chemicals that narrow blood vessels and it may reduce or prevent attacks. People who have a history of seizures should not take EPO. EPO can increase your risk of bleeding. Patients should talk to their doctor before taking it, especially if on blood thinners.

**Vitamin B3 (also known as niacin):** may help patients as it causes blood vessels to dilate and stimulates circulation to the skin. However, niacin has not been extensively studied as a treatment for Raynaud's, and may cause side effects including diarrhea, headache, stomach upset, and adverse skin reactions.

**Magnesium:** opens up blood vessels and may help patients. Magnesium can affect other medications so always consult a doctor before taking magnesium or any other supplements.

**Acupuncture:** Some people find that acupuncture decreases pain and improves circulation.

**Homeopathy:** may be useful to some patients as a supportive treatment.

**Mindfulness:** Is an effective way for patients with Raynaud's to manage pain. Mindfulness is a set of skills for healing, intuition, insight, calmness, focus, resilience and hope that you can develop to counter the stresses that chronic illness brings. You can literally train your mind to promote healing. Mindfulness has a positive flow on affect in every aspect of a person's life. For more info. click [here](#) [More info](#)

Raynaud's disease is diagnosed by the doctor examining symptoms and performing some blood tests.

- a full blood count – to check for infection
- an antinuclear antibodies (ANA) test – to check for an overactive immune system, which is common in people with connective tissue diseases and autoimmune conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus
- erythrocyte sedimentation rate – to check for inflammatory or autoimmune diseases

To check whether the patient has secondary Raynaud's disease the doctor may examine the tiny blood vessels, known as capillaries, found where the nail meets the finger. These capillaries are often larger in people with secondary Raynaud's disease, and look like red pen marks. Patients with secondary Raynaud's symptoms usually start after 30 years of age – most cases of primary Raynaud's begin between the ages of 20 to 30, severe pain is experienced during an attack of Raynaud's, and only one side of the body is affected.

Secondary Raynaud's disease can be caused by a host of disorders including [Chronic Fatigue Syndrome](#) and [Sjorgens Syndrome](#)

**Disclaimer:** Information and advice shared by the Towards Wellness Centre is of a general nature and is not intended to replace qualified medical advice. The Towards Wellness Centre does not accept responsibility for any actions or treatments undertaken.