

Living Well With Lupus – Raynaud’s Relief

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From one patient to another, I will share with you how I manage my symptoms in addition to what the doctors, physiotherapist and acupuncturist can do. Perhaps some of the things that have worked for me will also help you with your symptoms.

Taking the edge off of the bone chilling cold sensations and the pain that comes with it can be challenging. Some things that have helped me are:

- Soaking my feet or hands in a bowl of warm water with Epsom salts dissolved in the water.
- Pre-warming my bed with an electric mattress pad, electric heating pad or electric blanket and turning it off just before getting into bed to avoid the electro-magnetic fields that can form around the coils of the heating device and affect my body.
- Pre-warming my bed with a hot water bottle.
- Using TENS on the soles of my feet and acupressure or pen point TENS on acupuncture points such as Lu 9-, H 7-, P 6-, Lu 7-, Sp 6-, K 3-, K 6-, B 62-, Li 11-, Li 4-, St 36+ and others. Your registered acupuncturist can advise you on what points may be the best for you.
- Using microwavable gel or cherry pit hot packs wrapped around my feet, ankles or hands.
- Getting enough quality sleep.
- Eating healthy, nutrient dense foods to properly nourish my cells, tissues and brain.
- Drinking adequate water to help flush metabolic waste and toxins out of my body.
- Self-massage from my feet up to the waist and from my hands to my chest to help my lymphatic system get rid of excess fluid and increase blood circulation to my extremities.
- Reduce stress hormones by daily breathing exercises, guided imagery, autogenic relaxation, gratitude journal and spiritual exercises.
- Limiting use of over the counter medications which all disrupt my body’s acid/alkaline balance and disturbs other body chemicals.
- Taking probiotic supplements and eating naturally fermented foods to help my immune system work better by keeping a healthy microbiome in my digestive tract.

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- Wearing good quality, supportive footwear so my plantar fasciitis does not make the Raynaud’s worse. No, I do not wear any heels over ½ inch or 13 mm high. Sorry fashion divas, my health comes first.
- Walking 10,000 steps per day. It took a while, a couple of months to work up to that number, but now it is easy. I build walking into breaks, lunch, before work and after work.
- Sitting with my feet up on a box when working on my computer or on a foot stool when sitting somewhere else.
- Drawing alphabet letters with my feet when I am sitting down to increase circulation.
- Bed socks: I use very thick, soft -40 degree C rated work socks which are loose night tight at the ankles. I wear these to bed and around the house so my feet feel warmer and hurt less.
- Bed mittens: I use fleece, loose fitting mittens to bed so my hands feel warmer and hurt less.
- Non thermal (cold) laser therapy at 660 nm and 905 nm which is offered by many physiotherapists and chiropractors. I bought a LaserPath 600 to use at home. Unfortunately it is now old and needs replacing. One good lottery win and it could happen.
- Massage therapy for lymphatic drainage and for circulation. This usually meant waiting for a gift certificate for my birthday or Christmas.

You are the person in charge of your healthcare. The choices are yours.

Ask your doctor before starting any new modalities. Your doctor may be able to recommend someone who can help you get started.

My physiotherapist/osteopath/acupuncturist was a great help, teaching me how to use pen point TENS and other techniques. Some extended health insurance plans cover part of the cost of a TENS machine.

You can learn to manage your Raynaud’s symptoms to some degree if not completely within your own limitations. Do it for yourself and your health, not for anyone else. Just commit to yourself and DO IT!