

"Working with a knowledgeable hand therapist can make the difference between success and failure in complex hand surgical cases. The therapist extends the continuum of our care, as well as functioning as coach and trainer for our patients."

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What is Raynaud's disease?

Raynaud's disease is a condition where the blood vessels open and close too much in response to temperature and stress. When someone with Raynaud's is exposed to cold temperatures, their blood vessels will get smaller and cause pain and the skin will turn white or blue. Raynaud's can occur in the hands, feet, nose, ears and the tip of the tongue.



Raynaud's disease causes fingers to turn white or blue when exposed to cold temperatures

What are the symptoms of Raynaud's disease?

When exposed to cold temperatures, skin may turn white or blue because the vessels narrow. When the hand warms, the vessels will widen quickly and blood rushes into the hand, causing the hand to turn red. Pain may go with these temperature changes.

What causes Raynaud's disease?

There are two types of Raynaud's disease, primary and secondary. Primary Raynaud's has no known cause at this time. Secondary Raynaud's is a result of trauma or injury. People with scleroderma have a high likelihood of experiencing Raynaud's phenomenon.

What is the treatment for Raynaud's disease?

Treatment for Raynaud's focuses on symptom management. Those with Raynaud's should keep the temperature of their hands controlled when they are in the hot or cold. A doctor may also prescribe medicine to help normal blood flow. Smokers should try to reduce nicotine use, as this narrows blood vessels and reduces blood flow.

What can a hand therapist do for me?

A hand therapist can assist people in finding gloves or other garments to help keep the temperature of their hands regulated. The therapist will provide education on the disease and offer strategies for reducing the frequency and intensity of symptoms. They may also provide advice on lifestyle changes that can prevent vessel narrowing, such as reducing caffeine intake. A hand therapist can also help determine specific triggers and offer activity and environmental modifications.



Without gloves or other garments, cold-weather activities, such as scraping ice off a windshield, can trigger symptoms of Raynaud's disease