



Cold Cuts



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Cold Hands, Warm Heart: My Mother Was Wrong!

By Dr. Celeste De Bease
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Actually, the warmth of our heart plays a significant role in keeping our hands warm. For the person with Raynaud's however, the warmth of the heart does little to keep blood moving into the hands. What's happening?



The Radiator System of the Body

Just like water flowing through the steam radiators in my old but charming home, our blood flows throughout our bodies bringing warmth. Like the boiler in the basement, the heart pumps warm blood to every living cell. That blood has been warmed by virtue of hanging around the inner core of our bodies. How warm is this blood? Well, it's 98.6° F, our "normal" body temperature. This warm blood will circulate throughout your body if nothing obstructs the pipes (your blood vessels). When it reaches your hands, it should be able to keep them at about 90°F or warmer when you're sitting inside (at normal room temperature; 70°F or so).

The Aeration System of the Body

One of the most amazing things I learned in biology was that breathing is not just about what goes on with our lungs. This is only half the picture. It's actually the cells that are doing the breathing!

Here's how it works. When we inhale, our lungs take in oxygen-rich air. Then the oxygen slides through the lining of the lungs and gets picked up by the blood and stored in its storage bins (hemoglobin molecules). The oxygen-rich blood runs through our arteries and delivers the oxygen to the all the cells in our body. The cells use the oxygen to

do work (cellular repair, synthesis of materials and energy, even cellular reproduction!!!). The waste material is the carbon dioxide, which is taken by the blood through our veins back to the

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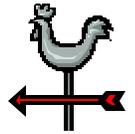
lungs. It's the same carbon dioxide that we exhale. When the blood is carrying oxygen, its color is red; when it's carrying carbon dioxide, it's more bluish (thus arteries are red and veins are blue).



Inside This Issue

- ◆ Biofeedback Article
- ◆ Local Weather Alert Service
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Local Weather Alerts



The Weather Channel recently announced a new subscription service called Notify! The service delivers severe weather alerts regarding conditions in your local area to either your home phone, cell phone, pager, or e-mail address.

Alerts are sourced from The National Weather Service. Options include several key warnings, including:

- * Tornado Warnings
- * Severe Weather Watches
- * Tropical Storm/Hurricane Warnings
- * Winter Storm Warnings
- * High Wind Warnings
- * Frost Freeze Warnings

The above service costs \$5.99/month or \$49.99/year. For an extra fee, you can receive customized alerts, such as rain, snow or extreme temperatures, weekend forecasts for golf courses or ski resorts, or weather-related health alerts including: air quality, sun safety and respiratory forecasts. For more information, go to The Weather Channel's website: www.weather.com/notify.

Raynaud's Colors: White, Blue and Red

When a person experiences Raynaud's Disease their small blood vessels that feed the skin constrict through a process called "vasospasm". These constricted blood vessels don't let the blood flow freely into the hands and they turn white (just as your face might turn white when you are frightened...the blood "drains" from your face). As the cells in the hands begin to cry out for oxygen (which the blood was supposed to carry to them), the skin turns blue. After a time, the blood returns to the

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Member Tips

Several members have sent us news, information and success stories that may prove useful to fellow frosties.

- **Nitroglycerin Cream** - Rebecca in New Hampshire suffered from black and blue toes with painful open sores. Her doctor had her rub nitroglycerin cream on her toes to keep the blood vessels open. The cream did the trick! While she still suffers from the cold NH winters, her toes are no longer changing color and sore like before. She tells me this is the same cream used to treat heart patients. She's been rubbing it on her fingers, too!
- **New Medication for Ulcer Treatment** - One of our Board members shared the news on a drug called Tracleer™, originally developed to treat pulmonary arterial hypertension. A recent clinical trial showed a potential additional benefit of interest to Raynaud's sufferers: Tracleer significantly reduced the number of open digital ulcerations - an important finding for those of us with severe attacks, particularly Secondary Raynaud's sufferers.

The drug's effectiveness needs to be confirmed in future trials, and there are potential side effects to be closely monitored, but the news is encouraging.

- **L-Arginine Dietary Supplement** - Mitzi from Virginia shared her mother's introduction to a dietary supplement called L-Arginine. It was recommended by her doctor at the University of Virginia who specializes in vascular medicine. He recommends it to his Raynaud's patients, all of whom he claims have improved since taking the product. *(Editor's note: There is no clinical proof for the effectiveness of L-Arginine or any other dietary supplement for the treatment of Raynaud's.)*

Thanks for these useful tips! Please consult your doctor to confirm if you're a candidate for any of these suggestions.

"In the depths of winter I finally learned there was in me an invincible summer." *Albert Camus*

They're Back - Get 'em While They're Hot!



Back by popular demand - those toasty, disposable charcoal packs you put in your gloves or shoes. For those of you not familiar with the products, they heat up when exposed to air and keep you yummy warm for hours. These packs are found in most ski and outdoor shops, and our members eat them up like candy. Problem is they aren't cheap, so the costs add up quickly.

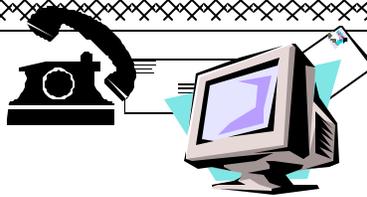
For a number of years, we offered them at wholesale prices to members at local meetings here in New York. Last year, we opened the orders up to the national mailing list, and could barely keep up with the requests!

Since we buy them wholesale in bulk from a distributor and pass the savings on to our members, **our unit prices can save you 40% or more off retail prices.** See the enclosed Order Form for details. While product prices are the same as last year, our shipping costs have increased. We found last year we were losing money on the charges for shipping and packing materials - plus postage/UPS costs increased, so we're just trying to ensure we break even on our out-of-pocket costs.

While the products are intended for one-time use only, you can extend the life of each pack. If you only use them for a portion of the total wear time (hand warmers last 7 hours, toe warmers about 3 or 4 hours), put them in an air-tight zip-lock bag until you're ready to use them again. Once re-exposed to air, they will heat up once more, albeit not quite as hot. I've successfully reheated them two times past their original use.

To order, send us back the enclosed Order Form, or e-mail your request to lynn@raynauds.org. But hurry - last year's response was a complete sellout!

Member Connections



Members have asked for experiences, interest or contact from members on the following topics:

- **Parents of children diagnosed with Raynaud's** - They'd like to speak with other parents coping with the issue. Please let me know if you're willing to be contacted by fellow members on the subject.
- **Meetings in Long Island, NY** - A couple of members have requested meetings in their area of Long Island. If we get enough interest, we'll schedule a session and see if there is long-term support for on-going meetings.

Please contact us with any input or help you'd like to offer in the above areas. Anyone wishing to connect with other Raynaud's members, ask questions or share success stories, send your requests to: Cold Cuts, Raynaud's Association, Inc., 94 Mercer Avenue, Hartsdale, NY 10530, or an e-mail to lynn@raynauds.org.

Hot Products for Cold Sufferers



Tis the season and, since you might want to alert Santa to put some these toasty products under your tree this year, we're happy to offer some excellent suggestions:

 **X-Hale Gloves** — These gloves have more going for them than their comfy fleece exterior, or their suede, flexible palm. There's a round port on the back that's an air chamber. Exhale your breath into the glove and deliver warmth down to your fingertips - it's that easy! The manufacturer promises the dexterity of a driving glove with the warmth of a ski glove (or better). They are warm and cozy without the breath feature and made to repel water to keep hands dry. I haven't yet put mine to the test, but I'm ready! Order item #SS200 for \$45.00 a pair from the Herrington catalog. Specify size: M, L, or XL. Call 800-903-2878, or visit www.HerringtonCatalog.com Please use key code #3640.

 **Weather-Or-Not Station** — Much better than squinting out the window at an outdoor thermometer, this bedside device tells you the outdoor temperature, along with three separate weather indicators, a perpetual calendar, a digital clock and a snooze alarm. It works by receiving weather conditions from a main unit outdoors using a wireless transmitter to send signals from up to 100 yards away. Both units run on standard batteries (included). Choice of Blue or Grey. Available from the Lev-

enger catalog, item #L2-AT0380 for \$39.95. Call 800-544-0880 or visit www.Levenger.com Provide them with key code #2L4131.

 **Shoulder Cozy®** — Instantly take the chill off your shoulders, neck and back. It's cut wide like an oversized stole, with two pockets to keep hands warm and snug. Great for watching TV, cuddling up in an easy chair with your favorite book, or take it with you on the airplane. Made of machine washable, polyester fleece. Priced at \$29.95. Comes in Navy, Winter White, Pink, Burgundy, Light Blue, Purple, and Royal Blue. Order #25173 from the Vermont Country Store catalog at 800-362-8440, or visit www.vermontcountrystore.com. Please give them source code #72904.

 **WristRight™ Heated Wrist Rest** — Just as it sounds, the product is an electric wrist support that warms the wrist at your computer. Comes in two sizes: One fits a keyboard @ \$49.95, the other is for your mouse pad @ \$39.95. Both offer high or low settings for desired heat. Plugs into a standard 110 v. outlet. Order from Ramsin, Inc. at 800-633-3023, or visit www.WristRight.com for a full product description.

 **Anti-Vibration Gloves** — Some of us developed Raynaud's from the constant pressure to our fingertips, like typing, playing the piano, or using vibrating tools and equipment. Re-

gardless of how it starts, our fingertips can be highly sensitive to pressure. If you have to use jackhammers, saws, drills, etc., try these Anti-Vibration Gloves. They claim to be really comfy, with a pre-curved design that follows the natural contour of your hand for a good grip. Made of durable pigskin leather, machine washable, with adjustable fasteners for a custom fit. Offered in two styles: half -finger (#10566) @ \$16.99 (specify right or left hand), and full-finger (#10567), sold by the pair @ \$42.99. Specify size, comes in: S, M, L, XL, or XXL. Available from the Duluth Trading Co. catalog. Call 800-505-8888, or online at www.duluthtrading.com, Please mention catalog #T2288431.

 **Tervis Tumblers** — This product was recommended by Karen from Michigan. The plastic drinkware is insulated, thus providing two benefits: First, they keep drinks cold. Second (and most importantly), they keep your hands from freezing! I've seen similar glasses before, but never the variety of patterns and colors offered directly from this manufacturer. They claim over 1,700 possible combinations! The glasses are also dishwasher safe (top rack) and microwavable, with a lifetime guarantee. Available in 12 oz. and 16 oz. tumblers, plus a 17 oz. mug. Call 800-237-6688, or visit www.tervis.com. Thanks Karen!

Send your hot product alerts to lynn@raynauds.org.



Biofeedback

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hands and they turn red.

Biofeedback in the Treatment of Raynaud's

The goal of biofeedback therapy is to put an end to this red, white and blue thing! Thermal biofeedback has a great track record. For people with Raynaud's Disease, thermal biofeedback training is successful 80 to 90% of the time. Effects continue to be shown at one year and three year follow-ups.*

Here's how it works. You'd sit in a comfortable chair and train the body to vasodilate.

Did you expect more? Well, that's the beauty of thermal biofeedback training. It's elegantly simple. So why isn't everyone with Raynaud's Disease running to their nearest biofeedback therapist? It's because biofeedback is more about training than treatment. There's no "take two aspirin and call me in the morning." The training takes time, motivation, and practice. It takes about 20 sessions as well as home training to accomplish this feat.

*These results were obtained in the treatment of primary Raynaud's (Raynaud's Disease). For secondary Raynaud's (Raynaud's Phenomenon), biofeedback has been shown to be helpful in reducing some of the symptoms.

Raynaud's Problems/ Biofeedback's Solutions

Raynaud's sufferers have two challenges to overcome. The first is to reduce the stress that causes the initial vasoconstriction, and the second is to reverse the constriction once it occurs. Biofeedback therapy offers a two-pronged solution: downshifting the nervous system overall and training people to vasodilate their peripheral blood vessels.

Biofeedback trains you to induce voluntary control of physiological processes that have been altered by pathological disorders. I recall memorizing the function of the Autonomic Nervous System by saying "the Autonomic Nervous System is the automatic nervous system". It was spontaneous and beyond conscious control. Then East met West and everything changed. Our western scientists began studying the yogi masters in the East and discovered that they were in fact consciously controlling the automatic system. After years of collaboration, the West was able to mechanize and computerize the process of training that allows

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you to take conscious control over "automatic" bodily processes.

Stress is More Than a Feeling

You've often heard the phrase "I feel stressed", and most of us know exactly what is meant. We feel overwhelmed and out of control. Often we experience physical symptoms like an upset stomach, headache, fatigue and...cold hands. It's the Sympathetic branch of the Autonomic Nervous System that helps prepare the body to meet emergencies by "fight or flight." In an effort to meet the energy and strength requirements of an emergency, our digestion slows down, our muscles tighten, and we expend energy and the blood vessels near the skin contract.

Some of my patients swear they are not feeling stressed when they experience stress related symptoms. Then I ask, "How much sleep are you getting? What have you been eating? Have you been sick in the last few months?" Ah, here's the culprit--biological stress.

Biofeedback training accomplishes two very important tasks for Raynaud's sufferers. First, it helps them train to vasodilate their peripheral blood vessels so their hands can stay nice and warm. Second, it teaches them to reduce the impact of stress so their blood vessels will be less likely to constrict in the first place! Warm heart; warm hands...what a perfect match!



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