

## Welcome to the: Orthopaedic Opinion Online Website

The website for the answer to all your Orthopaedic Questions

- **Orthopaedic Opinion Online** is a website designed to provide information to patients who have orthopaedic and musculoskeletal problems and are undergoing treatment.
- **Patient information** is provided in the form of downloadable information sheets.
- **Orthopaedic advice** and second opinions can be provided by our expert internationally renowned Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeons.
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- **Book a clinical consultation** with one of our internationally renowned consultant orthopaedic surgeons in Bristol or London.
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### **Raynaud's Phenomenon**

Link - <http://www.arc.org.uk/arthritis/patpubs/6052/6052.asp>

Key words: Raynaud's syndrome, Raynaud's phenomenon, cold agglutinins,

#### **Summary**

This booklet has been produced for anyone interested in finding out more about Raynaud's phenomenon. We start out by explaining what this condition is. We go on to say something about other conditions which Raynaud's can be associated with, how these can be checked out, and what can be done to help.

#### **What is Raynaud's phenomenon?**

If you have Raynaud's phenomenon your hands, and sometimes your feet, change colour when exposed to cold conditions. Typically the hands go white, then blue, and then red as follows:

**White:** as the blood supply to the fingers is reduced

**Blue:** as the blood in the fingers becomes short of oxygen, and finally...

**Red:** as the blood comes rushing back when the hands become warm again.

Many people do not experience all three stages. For example, the hands may simply go blue then red. These colour changes are often accompanied by pain or a tingling feeling. People with Raynaud's phenomenon often complain of cold feet as well, and the tip of the nose may also feel uncomfortable and change colour in the cold. Examples of the sort of situation that might bring on an attack of Raynaud's are going out on a cold day or reaching into the freezer to take out some frozen food.

#### **What causes Raynaud's phenomenon?**

We do not fully understand why some people develop Raynaud's phenomenon, but others do not. For some reason the blood supply to the fingers and toes is reduced, especially in the cold. The blood supply to the fingers and toes is controlled by nerves connected to the blood vessels. The nerves can reduce the blood supply in response to certain situations, one of which is exposure to conditions of severe cold – this normal response prevents a loss of heat from the body. People with Raynaud's phenomenon probably have an exaggerated response to cold and shut off the blood supply more quickly than normal. Emotional changes, such as anxiety, can also cause an attack of Raynaud's by triggering the nerves to shut down the blood supply.

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