



Arthritis

Fight Back!

30 Natural Home and Folk Remedies

This is a short report that cuts to the chase
and gets right to the point:
**Remedies that have helped people
with arthritis to fight back!**

DISCLAIMER: These remedies have been well-researched but the authors do not accept any liability for any potential side-effects as a result of any adverse health side effects. We strongly recommend that you seek medical advice or advice from a qualified complimentary therapist if you have any doubts.

Introduction

Arthritis is a collective name for debilitating, progressive inflammatory diseases that affects the sufferer's joints and which can substantially restrict the flexibility and overall movement of those areas affected. There are over 100 different types of rheumatic diseases and the term 'arthritis' can strike fear into the sufferer as depending on the severity of the condition, it can greatly dominate peoples' lives causing much pain and discomfort. Arthritis typically affects older people especially in the case of Osteoarthritis but collectively, arthritis can actually affect anyone at any time.

The soft muscles in the joints become swollen and painful and it is this inflammatory effect that causes the movements in the joint to become restricted as time continues, and the condition progresses. Although arthritis is not life threatening, it has the capacity to impinge greatly on the life of the sufferer making even the most simplest of tasks difficult and sometimes beyond scope. When people think about arthritis, they often consider Rheumatoid Arthritis as this is one of the more aggressive forms of the overall disease but any condition that impacts the joints could be termed arthritic.

Severe stiffness is often experienced for the first hour of each day and again, after sitting for long periods. Arthritis affects people differently, so it's true to say that no two cases are the same. Some experience great pain but little degeneration in the joints and others, report less pain but x-rays show greater damage to the joints themselves. Rheumatoid is the most common of the autoimmune diseases but overall, Osteoarthritis affects more people worldwide.

Osteoarthritis usually affects those in the older age range; painful, uncomfortable stiffness ensues as degeneration in the affected joints occurs. This is the most common form of arthritis and it affects the cartilage (the soft tissue that works to protect the bone). The disease starts to make the cartilage brittle and pitted. The bone then thickens and outgrowths form along the external edges of the actual joint, and essentially space inside of the joint becomes reduced. This is how the joints become stiff and painful for movement to take place.

Rheumatoid Arthritis can affect any age group and is a debilitating disease. Exceptionally painful at its zenith, the fingers, wrists, feet, knees and hips can be affected but importantly, tissues of the body can be affected as well, including muscles and tendons.

It is an autoimmune disease that affects the joints by causing chronic inflammation but it can also impact other organs in the body too. Autoimmune diseases cause the body to turn in on itself as the tissues within the body are attacked by their own immune system. Known as a systemic illness, the side-effects of Rheumatoid Arthritis are chronic and can last for many years. There can be some relief from the pain but this can change suddenly and without warning. The damage over the years to the joints can be extensive and as such, mobility can be severely affected.

Arthritis can also be caused by the general wear and tear on the joints but some autoimmune disorders cause the body to begin to attack the joints and this is often a common cause of arthritis or rheumatism today.

Stress, hereditary conditions or even the aftermath of an infection- the actual causes are yet to be proven, but suggested treatment can vary including the suggestion of resting the affected joints, but it is worth noting that as much flexibility should be retained as possible within the individual joints.

Conventional Medicine

Rheumatologists have to observe the whole person to make an accurate diagnosis and this is by way of physical examinations, blood tests, and x-rays but the person's medical history is also taken into consideration. An accurate diagnosis is paramount because joint damage can occur so quickly. There is an extremely high risk of some disability being experienced even with diagnosis and treatment and the disease affects people differently so one successful treatment may not work on someone else.

In terms of Osteoarthritis, the doctors may prescribe some non-steroidal drugs which will help to reduce the inflammation of the joint, plus analgesics for pain control. There are a number of things that can be done to relieve the symptoms, and especially the pain. Depending on the severity of the disease, steroids may be injected directly into a joint for faster relief or oral-steroid drugs may be prescribed.

A joint replacement is a possibility if the arthritis affects those weight-bearing joints i.e. the hips and knees and these joint replacements will often last for up to 15 years giving back any quality of life that may have been lost as a result of the pain and restricted movement. This varies on an individual basis however.

Rheumatoid Arthritis sufferers need to ensure a correct diagnosis is carried out too and a physical examination along with blood tests can confirm whether they are suffering from this condition. It's worth remembering that people react differently in terms of severity and side-effects so rheumatologists need to ensure that they comprehend the whole picture in terms of any one patient before making a final diagnosis.

Joint damage can occur quite quickly following the onset of Rheumatoid Arthritis so this makes an early diagnosis essential. It typically develops in those people aged between 30 and 50 years old but it really can affect people at any age. It has been suggested that Rheumatoid Arthritis can drastically reduce the life expectancy of the sufferer by up to 15 years however, as the severity of the disease varies from person to person, other factors must be considered such as: general health, family history and of course, overall lifestyle options.

Sadly there is no set cure for those suffering with Rheumatoid Arthritis and conventional medicines have been known to cause some serious side-effects so although milder drugs may be prescribed initially, if and when the disease progresses, a stronger cocktail of medication may be required.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs are prescribed to help pain and to reduce any inflammation of the joints. Side effects can include gastric ulcers, damage to the liver or kidneys and even heart problems.

Steroids for a reduction of inflammation and disease modifying drugs to slow the actual progression of the disease can be prescribed if necessary but there are serious side-effects to consider such as lung infections and liver damage with these medications over time. The doctor may also prescribe Immunosuppressants to help control the sufferer's immune system which spirals completely out of control under the influence of the disease. There can be other drugs prescribed but these will be on an individual basis and governed by regular check-ups and the progression of the disease itself.

Natural Remedies

For many, a belief in using natural health remedies as opposed to the more conventional medicines is starting to rise to the fore. Because there can be unpleasant side-effects of those commonly prescribed drugs, a great many people have started to rethink their whole attitude towards health preferring a more natural approach instead. Whilst there

is always a place for conventional medicines, there is much that the sufferer can do to help themselves by way of a more holistic experience.

The natural approach is often a slower way forward to better health but it deals with the cause and not merely the symptoms. Natural remedies typically have far less side-effects than some medicines however, it is always good to err on the side of caution when trying out a new remedy and taking the instinctive approach is beneficial.

It can be wise for those starting out on their quest to find natural remedies to ease their arthritic conditions to try to create a journal that monitors the effectiveness of any of the remedies. General comments, quotes, hints and tips can be added alongside the dosage taken and this could prove an extremely useful reminder for when/if certain remedies have to be re-visited. It's important to remember that although some remedies may have worked extremely well for some people and really helped to alleviate the pain and discomfort, for others, that same remedy has little effect.

Taking time to try the remedies systematically is useful but it is always wise for the sufferer to request professional health advice if there are any concerns at all.

Bananas

Bananas, renowned for their healthy properties, have proved really useful in the treatment of arthritis. A rich source of vitamin B6, it is suggested that eating only bananas for a 3 or 4 day period is advised. It is acceptable to eat up to 8 or 9 bananas a day during this time.

Limes

Try the juice of one lime (always diluted with water) and take first thing every morning. Limes are beneficial in the fight against arthritis due to the citric acid within as it can counteract uric acid which can be a principle cause of arthritic conditions.

Coconut or Mustard Oil

Mix either warm mustard oil or coconut oil with two or three pieces of camphor and apply directly to the affected joints. This massage oil will increase blood supply and help to ease the stiffness and reduce the inflammation. This treatment can be used regularly to help ease the symptoms of arthritis.

Garlic

Eating raw garlic can be good for the treatment of arthritis as it is anti-inflammatory but for many, the pungent taste of garlic is far too unpleasant to eat raw, so adding garlic to meals is a less objectionable option. If even the thought of garlic as an ingredient is a repulsive option, it is easy to obtain non-odourless garlic supplements from any health food store.

Fenugreek Seeds

To ease any swelling and redness around the joints, roast some fenugreek seeds and soak them well in mustard oil before applying. Using this as a regular massage oil can help to extend the range of movement in that joint.

Drink Water

Water is often a forgotten entity but it is so important on a daily basis for general health and well-being, but keeping the body and joints hydrated is essential when suffering with any of the arthritic diseases. Drink the average daily dosage and your overall health will improve.

Ginger

Ginger has many exceptional qualities in the natural health arena but it is well-known for its beneficial properties at relieving arthritis. It contains zingibain which is a special enzyme that helps to relieve any inflammation of the joints. Ginger can be taken in capsule form, as a tincture, a tea, or can be eaten fresh.

Cayenne

This is another very useful herb for arthritic sufferers and can help a wide range of other conditions too. It can be used externally to help improve poor circulation and any arthritic pains as it is a warming herb. Capsicum ready-made creams are available or a few drops of tincture could be added to a general ointment if preferred. Cayenne can be hot however, so a word of caution as to the amount used initially. Test it first to ensure that no reactions occur.

Sesame Seeds

Soak just a teaspoon of black sesame seeds in a quarter of a cup of water overnight and drink first thing in the morning. The sesame seeds should also be consumed. This remedy has been found to be useful in preventing joint pains.

Turmeric

A long established remedy to help reduce inflammation, Turmeric capsules can be taken 3 times a day (500mg to 1000mg).

Green Tea

Green Tea has been shown to help reduce the side-effects of Rheumatoid Arthritis due to the antioxidants which are known as polyphenols, Green tea is widely available from health shops.

Heat and Ice

When your joints feel swollen or inflamed, try alternating hot and cold treatments to the area as this can help relieve the symptoms.

Natural Antioxidants

Increase the number of natural antioxidants consumed as these can help to reduce any damage caused to the joints. Natural Antioxidants can be found in many different types of berries and in green tea.

Pineapple

Pineapple works to reduce the pain and stiffness experienced from osteoarthritis and Rheumatoid Arthritis due to the bromelain within it. It is important to use fresh pineapple and not canned pineapple.

Blackstrap Molasses

Because copper deficiency has been considered a possible cause of Rheumatoid Arthritis, it can be useful to take a regular dosage of blackstrap molasses as it is a useful source of the mineral copper.

Cherries

Cherries are an excellent source of magnesium and this works as a natural pain-killer, so by eating fresh, organic cherries, this could really help ease some of the symptoms.

Devil's Claw

Devil's Claw originates from the Kalahari Desert and Bushmen over the centuries have used the roots to help treat arthritis. The name 'Devil's Claw' comes from the appearance of the fruit and it can be used in a tea but is widely available in health shops in a tablet form or as a tincture if preferred.

Eucalyptus Oil

This is an old but successful remedy and does bring relief against pain and inflammation. It can be added to a massage oil and applied, once warmed, directly to the joints. The warming process continues by applying a plastic wrap across the oiled joint and then, further application of warmed towels helps to increase the benefits of the oil. This remedy is ideal before retiring for bed.

Dandelion

Dandelion is a diuretic and therefore boosts urination. This can be especially good for arthritis sufferers as it can help to flush out toxins and excess body fluid from the joints. Dandelion tinctures can be readily purchased from health shops but it is easy to eat the young leaves raw as part of a salad for a nice boost of vitamins A and C. If preferred, an alternative remedy is to make into a tea by steeping 3 teaspoons of fresh dandelion leaves in 1 cup of boiling water.

Angelica

Angelica can be used as a compress for an affected joint or added to a hot bath for the sufferer to relax and to soak in for a while. It has anti-inflammatory properties and helps muscles to relax and is a great aid for those types of osteoarthritis where the joints feel cold. Using a tincture of Angelica is advised when making up the massage oil or as a compress. It is important to not use Angelica during pregnancy.

Celery

The common celery contains a large number of anti-inflammatory compounds and a high amount of potassium in addition. Lack of potassium has long been considered a possible cause of arthritis.

Glucosamine

Glucosamine is produced naturally and is found within the joints in a high concentration. Extra supplements when taken can help to reduce inflammation and to help with the management of pain. Glucosamine can be found in health food stores.

Nettles

Stinging nettles have long been used by those suffering in the intense grip of arthritis. It may be an extreme remedy but often provides considerable relief. The nettles are clasped in a gloved hand and thrashed against the swollen joint. There is method to this madness in that histamine is injected via the nettle stingers into the area which help to initiate an anti-inflammatory response by the body and therefore the symptoms of arthritis are alleviated.

Alternatively, the young leaves can be steamed or made into a tea. The young nettles do not sting.

Black Cohosh

Black Cohosh is readily available from local health stores in supplement form but is traditionally an American Indian herb which has long been used for treatment for arthritis. It has similar properties to aspirin tablets and therefore assists in pain relief.

Cider Vinegar

Due to its acidic properties, cider vinegar coupled with honey, can be a wonderful aid when drunk daily. Black molasses can also be added depending on taste. This is not a quick overnight remedy; a slow improvement is often experienced over time.

Epsom Salt

An old fashioned but popular remedy is to add 4 tablespoons of Epsom Salt to a hot bath as this can help to relieve the symptoms of arthritis and rheumatism.

Vitamins

It is worth double-checking that a nutritious diet is being followed daily and if not, that additional supplements are taken to compensate for those vitamins that may be lost:

B3, B5 and B6 are excellent at helping to reduce the swelling associated with arthritis and B12 also helps with the maintenance of the nervous system.

Vitamin C can help to fight against pain and to reduce the inflammation of joints. Vitamin C also promotes good health throughout the body.

Vitamin E helps to protect the joints whilst improving flexibility.

Vitamin K helps with depositing minerals to the bone matrix and is also known to benefit those who have arthritis.

Olive Oil

A renowned treatment to ease any pain associated with arthritis is warmed olive oil, when massaged into the affected joints, this can provide a soothing sense of relief.

Additional Massage Oil

This is a soothing and warming massage oil, and can help to ease the pain from the arthritis.

Juniper, Lavender, Sage, Rosemary, Garlic and Thyme

One part of each to ten parts of olive oil and then use immediately.

Potato Juice

Used in folk medicine treatments for many years, potato juice has long been considered a successful remedy for treating arthritic and rheumatic conditions. It's easy to prepare, simply cut a medium sized potato into quite thin slices and place these slices into a cup of cold water. (Do not peel the potato first).

The water should be drunk first thing every morning prior to eating breakfast and contains anti-inflammatory qualities that can help to reduce any uric acid deposition within the joints.

CONCLUSION

Arthritis is a frustrating disease irrespective of the type contracted. Pain, fear, loss of flexibility and less able to cope, it has the ability to change the sufferer's life significantly. Worse, because it can become progressive and at times, aggressive, it's vital that the person approaches the condition with as much positivity as possible and learns to adapt to the necessary lifestyle changes.

It's easy for the sufferer to become depressed, feel isolated and to allow the disease to claim the rest of their body by losing the remaining flexibility. This is often caused by sitting still for too long - which may be what the person feels is best, however, to retain flexibility, gentle movement should be undertaken and to work on the joints directly with non weight-bearing movements.

Focusing on what is achievable is vital. Trying to let go of those more unimportant changes may be hard but it is a case of the sufferer working intuitively with their own body because there can often seem to be little consistency as to the degree of pain or inflammation experienced.

Whilst medical advice should always be sought in terms of diagnosis and treatment there is much that can be done in a positive self-help way by lessening the pain, improving mobility and by simply making the condition bearable so that it does not impact the quality of life too significantly. Trying natural remedies that support the body and promote gentle healing can help to lessen the impact of these arthritic conditions and to also assist in a positive boost to morale.