Nine Non-Medicinal Remedies for RA Management

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Try These Natural Remedies for Rheumatoid Arthritis

Although medication is a great way to manage rheumatoid arthritis (RA), there are many ways you can help keep your RA symptoms in check with strategies that do not involve medication; these can be classified as natural remedies for rheumatoid arthritis.

It's important that you speak with your doctor so they know exactly what you are doing, as some natural remedies for rheumatoid arthritis may actually interfere with your medication. It is also imperative that you do not solely rely on alternative or non-medication strategies, as these strategies are more for relief rather than treatment.

Improve Your Diet

Following a diet that is rich in omega-3 fatty acids can be incredibly helpful for keeping your joints feeling their best. It also helps produce tears for those who have RA-related dry eyes.

You can find omega-3 fatty acids in a variety of fatty fish, like mackerel, tuna, sardines, and salmon. It can also be found in eggs, peanut butter, walnuts, beef, tofu, and soybeans.

You can also take it in vitamin form, which you can purchase under the name omega-3 or as a fish oil pill. Many people find that this helps relieve some of the pain associated with RA.

Bath Soaks

If you find you have lots of joint stiffness in the morning, taking a warm bath can actually help your muscles and joints loosen. However, some people find that this makes them feel sleepier, so you may want to either do this at night or wake up several hours in advance to take your bath.

After running a warm bath, soak in it for up to 20 minutes and stretch your joints and muscles to keep them nice and loose. The heat will help keep you limber and ready for the day.

Stretching

Doing stretching exercises in the morning will also help keep your muscles and joints loose and limber. If you suffer from morning stiffness and find that taking a hot bath in the morning isn't possible, stretch as much as you can in your bed.

You can do light RA exercises, leg lifts, toe touches, a few slight backbends, and side bends. This should help wake up your limbs and keep your body slightly more limber for the day.

Warm Compress

Using hot compresses throughout the day can get your joints feeling better. Because the heat reduces inflammation, placing a hot water bottle or a heating pad on the affected area for 30 minutes or so can help keep your painful joints in check.

It is also recommended that you do this in the morning when you are helping your joints limber up for the day.

Olive Oil

Although it may sound silly, rubbing olive oil directly on your affected joints can actually make a huge difference. Because of its high-fat content, it can help loosen up your joints and make them feel less tight and painful.

Rub a little bit on each joint, making sure to get each finger and toe individually. Don’t wipe it off, but instead let your body absorb it.

Exercise

Though at times exercise may feel impossible, it can also be a very helpful strategy when it comes to managing RA. Engaging in activities like swimming, yoga, tai chi and the elliptical are not only a great way to get in a cardiovascular workout, but also help strengthen the muscles around your joints.

Work out as often as you can, but don’t overdo it, as this can make your symptoms worse. Instead, listen to your body and exercise when your body is feeling at its best.

If you never seem to get a respite from pain, try taking a pain pill about an hour before exercising to make it easier on your body.

Massage

For some, massage can be an incredibly powerful tool for reducing the pain associated with RA. This is especially beneficial if the muscles in your body tighten or spasm as a result of RA pain.

You can have a friend massage your body or you can have it done at a local physical therapy center. Although massages at spas are great, they are often not particularly tailored to your problem areas and/or medical issues. Instead of going to a fancy spa, try out a medical massage or a physical therapy office that also offers massage.

Meditation

Meditation exercises, especially in the context of yoga, can help you release your negative energy and focus on the positive aspects in your life. Because RA is often so painful, it can be difficult to fully relax and find inner peace and calm.

Meditation can be done within the context of a class, but you can also do it in the comfort of your own home. Many YouTube channels have guided meditations and breathing exercises that you can do for free and don’t require any extra downloading. These are perfect to help you relax when you are in a lot of pain or to help bring your pain level down.

Essential Oils

Some essential oils have anti-inflammatory properties that can be used on your joints and help reduce the pain. You can also drop some of these essential oils into a footbath and soak your hands or feet or add them to a hot bath for your entire body.

They can also be massaged directly into your skin to help take away some of the inflammation and pain.

The best essential oils to use for RA include lavender oil, marjoram oil, and eucalyptus oil. When using these oils, however, it is important to be mindful of the directions and not to just splash them on your body. Some oils are very strong and require dilution before use, so pay attention to exactly how to use them before doing so.