

## An introduction to Raynaud's Disease

This article aims to discuss the condition Raynaud's disease/syndrome which is also known as white finger.

Raynaud's disease is a condition that affects blood vessels in the body's extremities, such as toes, fingers and ears. People who have the condition sometimes get episodic attacks that happen when the blood vessels in a person's toes and fingers constrict.

The condition can occur in the body on its own or can be linked to another condition such as lupus.

Recent surveys have shown that Raynaud's disease could affect around 5 to 10% of the US population with women more likely to develop it. The disease is much more common in people who live in cold climates or work with vibrating machinery.

When a person is exposed to extreme levels of cold, the body will usually react by trying to preserve its temperature. To do this the blood vessels that control blood flow to the skin will switch from veins near the surface to ones deeper in the body. But when people have Raynaud's disease, their arteries of extremities such as fingers and toes may collapse stopping blood flow and causing them to appear white.

Most people who have Raynaud's syndrome will have the primary form which is milder than secondary. Primary versions of the syndrome have no underlying diseases or linked medical problems. These people who have the primary condition very rarely go on to form a secondary disease. Studies have shown that people who have primary Raynaud's disease, fewer than nine percent will go on to develop a secondary disease.

The less common, secondary Raynaud's disease is a much more complex and serious condition which is caused by an underlying disease. The most common disease that cause it are connective tissue ones. Other things that can cause the secondary form are carpal tunnel syndrome, obstructive arterial disease and some drugs like beta blockers.

Certain occupations can also leave people prone to secondary Raynaud's syndrome. People that work in the plastics industry can develop a scleroderma like condition that is linked to Raynaud's. Also workers who operate vibrating machinery and tools are prone to developing a form of the disease known as vibration white finger.

Raynaud's can sometimes lead to other medical problems such as skin ulcers and gangrene in toes and fingers.

Raynaud's disease is fairly easy for doctors to diagnose, but problems arise in trying to identify which form the patient has.

## About the Author

This article was written on behalf of the Vibrating tool helpline who deal with compensation claims for sufferers of [Raynauds disease](#) and [white finger](#) conditions

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