

## Traditional Methods of Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis

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### Abstract

Traditional medicine is getting popularity in current practice of all fields of medicine. Concept of organic food is also reemerging in world. Due to resistance against the common antibiotic, researchers are working more on traditional method of treatments. Rheumatoid arthritis is treated with NSAIDs, steroids and DMARDs. It is estimated that 60 to 90 percent people use alternative method of treatment for the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis like pain and stiffness. Physiotherapy, Herbal medicine and chiropractic are very popular. Borage seed oil (*Borago officinalis*), capsaicin, curcumin (diferuloyl methane), feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*), Flaxseed oil, H15 (extract of *Boswellia serrata*, olibanum), RA1 (standardized Ayurvedic formulation) and Reumalex are popular herbal medicine that are used in rheumatoid arthritis. No doubt use of traditional medicine is increasing in modern world but the evidence of its effectiveness is required more research work and studies. Academic research program like master and doctoral degree can fulfill these gaps.

### Introduction

Rheumatoid arthritis is an inflammatory autoimmune disease that is characterized by synovitis of multiple joints with involvement of other soft tissue like skin, kidney, and lungs. Disease affects small joints of hand and foot also. Rheumatoid arthritis is disease of joints and body due to autoimmunity characterized by synovitis of synovial lining of synovial joint capsule [1]. Most prevalence is in females and over age 40 [2]. Patients suffering from rheumatoid arthritis have joint pain; reduce muscle strength, and difficulty in activities of daily life [3]. Impaired muscle strength, endurance and aerobic capacity are key element in patient with rheumatoid arthritis [1]. Aim of study was to investigate the effectiveness of strengthening exercises in patients with rheumatoid arthritis in changing their health related quality of life and activities of daily life. If strengthening exercises have vital role in decline in pain and improving the quality of life then patients with rheumatoid arthritis will performed their activity of life easily with improved health and well-being.

Traditional medicine is getting popularity in current practice of all fields of medicine [4]. Concept of organic food is also reemerging in world [5]. Due to resistance against the common antibiotic, researchers are working more on traditional method of treatments [6]. Use of honey is increasing for wound healing, for treatment of hypertension and also in many GIT conditions [7]. This will be an era when there will be no more antibiotic for the treatment of common infections [8]. Traditional medicine and alternative treatments are low cost and with minimum side effects [9]. Some parts of the world like China, India, and Africa still traditional method of treatment are present and this concept is reviving again in modern practice [10]. New drugs cost a lot to bring it in market [11]. In this modern world it is need to work more on these traditional medicine and treatments [12]. Chronic diseases and psychological issues are best treated by traditional medicines [13]. In this modern and fast world, stress is essential in many people. Traditional medicines are proving effective to cope the stress, anxiety and depression. Uses of herbs are increasing in treatments of many conditions like rheumatoid arthritis, cancer and many other conditions. Following are reason why world is moving again towards the traditional medicine.

- Traditional medicine is easily available.
- Traditional medicines are low costs.
- With reduce risks and side effects

- More work and research is being done on traditional medicine.
- National institute of health in many countries like United States, Canada and Australia recognized the traditional methods of treatments.
- Traditional medicine is getting popularity as a holistic approach to treat all part of fitness and health like bio-psycho-social.
- Traditional medicines are more effective in chronic conditions.

**Medical management of rheumatoid arthritis:** There is no exact cause for rheumatoid arthritis. Disease is common in older population. Rheumatoid arthritis is treated with NSAIDs, steroids and DMARDs.

**Physical therapy treatments:** Physical therapy treatment helps to prevent deformity in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. Goals are to keep patients mobilize to minimize the effects of chronic disorder and prolong bed rest. Range of motion exercises keep the joint in normal range and prevent from stiffness. Gentle strengthening exercise can be used to maintain the muscle strength.

### Traditional Methods use in Rheumatoid Arthritis

Different traditional methods of treatments are available for rheumatoid arthritis in the form of Chinese herbs, massage, and acupuncture. Cognitive behavior therapy can be used to minimize the effects of chronic disorder on mood.

### Use of herbs

It is estimated that 60 to 90 percent people use alternative method of treatment for the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis like pain and stiffness [14]. Physiotherapy, Herbal medicine and chiropractic is very popular. Borage seed oil (*Borago officinalis*), capsaicin, curcumin

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**Received** August 17, 2017; **Accepted** September 09, 2017; **Published** September 13, 2017

**Citation:** Afzal F, Afzal A (2017) Traditional Methods of Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis. J Tradit Med Clin Natur 6: 242. doi: [10.4172/2573-4555.1000242](https://doi.org/10.4172/2573-4555.1000242)

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(diferuloyl methane), feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*), Flaxseed oil, H15 (extract of *Boswellia serrata*, olibanum), RA1 (standardized Ayurvedic formulation) and Reumalex are popular herbal medicine that are used in rheumatoid arthritis [14]. Many patients with rheumatoid arthritis are using traditional method of treatments. According to Jaya and colleagues about two third patients are using alternative and traditional methods of treatments [15]. In a recent study conducted by Alamgeer and colleagues in Pakistan in which the anti-arthritic effects of *Berberis orthobotrys* Bien were investigated and they concluded that this plant can be used for the rheumatoid arthritis [16].

## Conclusion

No doubt use of traditional medicine is increasing in modern world but the evidence of its effectiveness is required more research work and studies. Academic research program like master and doctoral degree can fulfill these gaps.

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