

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

Supportive Management

- During flare-ups (when joints feel painful, stiff, or swollen), rest the joints affected. Have rest periods throughout the day to protect the joints and to reduce fatigue.
- Perform an exercise program (designed by physical therapist and doctor) that is suitable to your fitness level and existing joint damage.
- Apply heat pack or take warm baths to soothe stiff joints. A heat pack can be made at home by wrapping in a towel a tightly-closed glass bottle filled up with hot water. Ensure that glass bottle does not come in direct contact with the skin.
- Apply cold packs for acute pain. A cold pack can be made at home by wrapping an ice pack (plastic bag filled with ice) or several ice cubes in a towel.
- Discuss with the doctor the possible inclusion of omega-3 fish oil supplement in the diet. Omega-3 fish oil supplement helps ease rheumatoid arthritis pain and morning stiffness.

Herbal Medicine

• Luya

- Roast or heat a slice of luya and apply externally on painful area. Another way to prepare it is to heat thin slices of luya with oil. After letting the oil cool, apply it on painful area.

• Bawang, Luya, and Siling Labuyo Oil

- Heat in coconut oil equal parts of chopped bawang, luya, and crushed siling labuyo. The proportion for coconut oil and the combined dried ingredients (bawang, luya, and siling labuyo) is 1:1. For 10-15 minutes, heat the mixture together, and then strain. Apply the oil externally on painful area.

• Tanglad Roots with Coconut Oil Liniment

- Crush the tanglad roots in coconut oil. Apply externally on painful area.

• Lubigan Rhizome Liniment

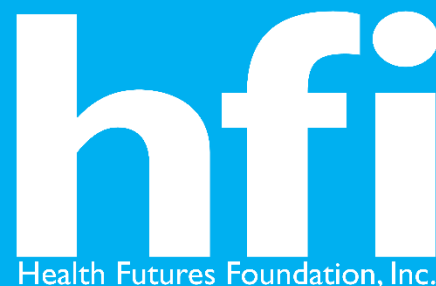
- Crush the dried rhizome and mix it with oil. Apply externally on painful area.

• Pandan Liniment

- Pandan or pandang mabango can either be used. Crush the leaves of the plant and mix them with oil. Apply externally on painful area.

• Sulasi

- Pound the leaves and apply its juice externally on painful area.



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RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

Other Complementary and Alternative Therapy

- **Acupressure**

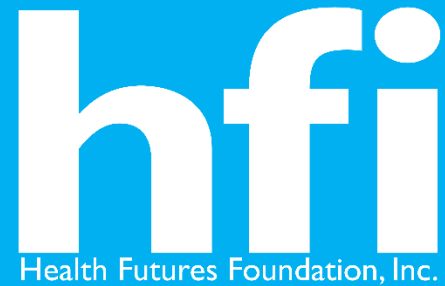
- Acupressure is traditional healing art which uses the fingers, palms, elbows, or feet to apply pressure on the body's healing points (acupoints). This is believed to restore the life force energy of the body or qi, which, in turn, improves health.
- Please visit the following link containing a video demonstration on performing acupressure intended for persons with rheumatoid arthritis: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jR1ndDjnJxM>

- **Acupuncture**

- This should be done under the guidance of a trained acupuncture practitioner.
- Acupuncture involves the insertion of fine needles through the skin and on the body's healing points which is believed to restore the life force energy or qi, which, in turn, improves health.

–**Consult doctor:**

- For proper diagnosis and pharmacologic treatment of the condition
- If properly diagnosed as having rheumatoid arthritis:
 - Discuss with doctor and collaborate with physical therapist in creating appropriate exercise program (emphasizing low-impact aerobics, muscle strengthening and flexibility).
 - Discuss inclusion of omega-3 fish oil supplement in the diet and its possible side effects and interactions.



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