

## Herbs for Joint Pain

**H**erbs and other natural remedies may help relieve joint pain associated with arthritis.

Medical treatments, regular exercise, and proper nutrition can also help a person manage their arthritis symptoms. Natural remedies, such as herbs and supplements, might be safe, effective treatment options with few significant side effects.

### Borage Oil

The seeds of the *Borago officinalis* plant, or starflower, contain large quantities of an omega-6 fatty acid called gamma-linolenic acid (GLA). It also contains linolenic acid, the precursor of GLA.

When the body metabolizes it, GLA converts into a precursor of prostaglandin, an eicosanoid (or signaling molecule) that helps regulate immune responses in the body.

Some authors recommend using borage seed oil instead of GLA because the former protects DNA from oxidative stress.

### Turmeric

Turmeric is a yellow spice and medicinal herb that originated in India. The orange pulp inside the



stem contains the potent plant compound curcumin.

Large number of animal studies and trials suggest that curcumin may reduce chronic inflammation due to Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA).

### Cat's Claw

*Uncaria tomentosa* (*U. tomentosa*), or "cat's claw," is a vine plant native to South and Central America.

Cat's claw may improve immune function and reduce inflammation. However, not enough high-quality clinical trials exist to support these claims.

### Eucalyptus

Oil distilled from eucalyptus leaves has antibacterial, antiviral, and anti-inflammatory properties. The flavonoids and tannins in eucalyptus leaves have antioxidant

properties that may help reduce inflammation and pain.

### Frankincense

*Boswellia serrata*, or frankincense, is the resin from the bark of the *Boswellia* tree. This resin has a strong aromatic quality, making it a popular ingredient in perfumes, incense, and essential oils.

Frankincense may also offer benefits for people with chronic inflammation. According to the Arthritis Foundation, the active compounds in frankincense possess anti-inflammatory properties that could help relieve arthritis symptoms.

### Aloe Vera

Aloe vera is a succulent plant popular for its health benefits. Many wound healing ointments and skin products contain aloe vera because of its antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties.

The compounds in aloe vera help remove free radicals from the body, much like antioxidants. These antioxidant functions also help reduce inflammation by preventing the production of inflammatory enzymes.

## Naturopathic Medicine for GERD

**N**aturopathic Medicine approach to digestive wellness may include dietary modification, food allergy identification and desensitization, homeopathic remedies, nutritional supplements, immune support, high-quality probiotics, and additional testing.

Naturopathic treatment for GERD is a mixture of both traditional and complementary medicine. Naturopathic interventions are typically tailored for the individual and may involve dietary and lifestyle modifications, mind-body therapies, physical or manual therapies, and ingestible medicines with complex chemical compositions and multiple actions.

**Peppermint/ spearmint oil** – It is reported to show



beneficial effects in providing relief from various symptoms of GERD like it may help ease heartburn, upset stomach, and nausea.

**Iberogast-** STW 5 (Iberogast) is a commercial ethanolic extract formula that has shown to be effective in treating various symptoms of gastrointestinal disorders including GERD. Iberogast formulation helps increase the motility of the distal stomach and inhibit the function of the proximal stomach.

**Raft-forming Agents** - Natural substances like alginate, pectin, and carbenoxolone (derived from licorice root) are known to be used in the symptomatic

treatment of GERD where it helps treat heartburn and esophagitis. The raft forming agents are known to form a foamy raft when it comes into contact with gastric contents. This raft moves into the esophagus ahead of acidic gastric contents and prevents the reflux of gastric contents into the esophagus. Thus, these raft forming agents provide a barrier to reduce acid contact with the esophageal mucosa. This combination is also known to prevent relapse of healed reflux esophagitis.

Naturopathy treatment for GERD may also include *Artemisia Asiatica*, Curcumin/ Quercetin and alpha-tocopherol, Milk thistle seed and melatonin.

### Chiropractic Treatment for Neck Pain

Chiropractic neck adjustments, called cervical manipulation, loosen up the joints of the cervical vertebrae in the neck. This can reduce pain caused by pinched nerves, muscle spasms, strains and other contributing factors.

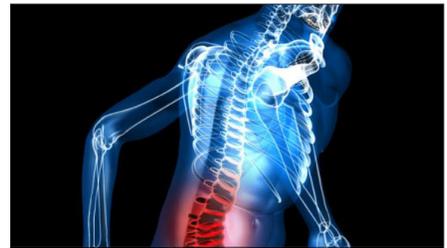
Most neck pain is associated with poor posture combined with age-related wear and tear. Chiropractors use their hands to manipulate the neck and place the vertebrae back into alignment, combatting the effects of posture and other factors.

In conjunction with chiropractic treatment plan, continual stretching and home exercises can ensure that neck pain stays at bay. Soft tis-

sue massage can also loosen muscle knots in the neck and shoulders to relieve pain.

Chiropractic adjustments reduce joint restrictions or misalignments in the spine and other joints, which can reduce inflammation and improve function of both the affected joint and nervous system. This gives the body, ability to better manage the discomfort in the neck.

Research shows that patients with chronic neck pain enrolled in clinical trials reported significant improvement following chiropractic adjustments. As part of a literature review published in the *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological*



*Therapeutics*, researchers reviewed nine previously published trials and found high-quality evidence that patients with chronic neck pain showed significant pain-level improvements following spinal manipulation. Additionally, all groups showed positive changes up to 12 weeks post-treatment.

### Balneotherapy for Atopic dermatitis

Balneotherapy and spa therapy emerged as an important treatment modality in the 1800s, first in Europe and then in the United States. Balneotherapy involves immersion of the patient in mineral water baths or pools. Today, water therapy is being practiced in many countries.

Atopic dermatitis in the “dry” phase may be alleviated by local treatment designed to improve skin moisture and protect against external irritants.



Inoue et al. reported that balneotherapy using Kusatsu hot spring water (Japan) is useful for control-

ling the skin symptoms of acute flares/ exacerbations of refractory cases of atopic dermatitis. It is now widely accepted that patients with atopic dermatitis are prone to cutaneous *Staphylococcus aureus* infection during phases of acute exacerbation and that an increased density of *S. aureus* is found to correlate well with the severity of skin manifestations.

Inoue et al. reported the effectiveness of Kusatsu hot spring bathing followed by immediate application of white petrolatum in controlling skin symptoms of exacerbations of refractory cases of atopic dermatitis. This treatment had no side effects. The hot spring water was thought to act against *S. aureus* because this microorganism was found to decrease in number or to disappear altogether from the skin surface during balneotherapy. The bactericidal activity of the hot spring

water against *S. aureus* is expressed by the coexistence of manganese and iodide ions in water underacidic conditions (pH 2–3). In addition to its application as a treatment for refractory cases of atopic dermatitis, an acidic solution containing manganese and iodide ions is used as a disinfectant in various areas of medicine.

### Understanding Hypothyroidism in Unani Medicine

**H**ypothyroidism is the most common thyroid disorder, affects women more frequently, and incidence increases with age. The prevalence of hypothyroidism in developed countries is around 4-5%, whereas, in India, it is about 11%.

The common symptoms of hypothyroidism in adults are weight gain, fatigue, lethargy, cold intolerance, constipation, change in voice, and dry skin. It can affect all systems of the body. Diagnosis is mainly based on clinical history and laboratory investigations. Untreated hypothyroidism increases morbidity and mortality.

In conventional medicine, the treatment of choice is Levothyroxine, whereas in Unani System of Medicine, pharmacotherapy consists of single and compound drugs. Single drugs are selected as per the constitution (Mizaj) of drugs as opposed to the abnormal constitution (Su-e-Mizaj) of disease and its pa-



thology. Some drugs increase the basal metabolic rate whereas some evacuate the morbid material from the body by the action of purgation. The drugs are used either in a single form or as a prescription of more than one drug in the form of decoction (Joshandah), infusion (Kheshandah), or powder (Safoof).

In Unani system of medicine (USM), the main emphasis of the principle of treatment (Usool-e-Ilaj) is to correct the abnormal constitution (Su-e-Mizaj) and alter the six prerequisites for existence (Asbab-e-Sitta Zarooriya) to restore normal health. It is a packaged treat-

ment, that is, different components of treatment are given via package form which includes different drugs, their dosage forms and regimens.

As far as the clinical features of Hypothyroidism (Qillat-i-Ifraze Darqia) are concerned, they somehow resemble the symptoms and signs of su'-mizaj barid maddi/Su'-Mizaj Balghami (impaired substantial cold temperament/ (impaired phlegmatic temperament) which almost all great Unani Physicians like Ibn Sina (980-1037 A.D.), Ibn Rushd (1126-1198 A.D.), Ibn -Hubul Baghdadi (1122- 1213 A.D.), Zakaria Razi (860-925 A.D.) in their respective treatises like Al-Qanun Fi'l-Tibb (The Canon of Medicine), Kitab al-Kulliyat (Basics of Unani Medicine), Kitab al-Mukhtarati'l-Tibb (A classical unani medical text), Kitab al-Mansuri (A classical unani medical text), respectively have described in detail.

### Herbs to Treat Kidney Ailments

**T**here is substantial evidence in Ayurveda that suggests that some herbs have a range of important therapeutic properties in preventing progression of chronic kidney diseases, Executive Director of AIMIL Pharma Sanchit Sharma said at a Science event in Kolkata.



At the India International Science Festival, experts from various streams of traditional systems of medicine such as unani, ayurveda, yoga and panchkarma deliberated on how herbs can be effective in prevention and management of kidney ailments. With limited options for treatment of the kidney disease in allopathy being available, they claimed that herbs could slow down the disease's progression and offer relief from its symptoms, along with careful diet and exercise.

The effectiveness of the drug made of the punarnava has re-

cently been documented in a study conducted at the Banaras Hindu University (BHU). It showed promising results in experimental subjects as the herbal drug significantly prevented and reduced the increased levels of kidney function parameters such as serum creatinine, uric acid and electrolytes. It also helped to maintain histological parameter of kidneys. Stating that scope of treatment of kidney ailments in allopathy were limited and costly, an expert said the emphasis now is on ayurvedic drugs.