What is Raynaud's Phenomenon

Raynaud's Phenomenon is a disorder that causes discoloration of the toes and fingers. This condition may also cause your nails to break easily and become brittle with longitudinal ridges. This condition was named for French physician Maurice Raynaud, the phenomenon is believed to be the result of a sudden constriction of a blood vessel that greatly reduces the flow of blood to their respective regions. Stressful situations and cold temperatures are the usual triggers of the condition. In extreme cases, Raynaud's Phenomenon can progress to the premature death of cells and living tissue or the localized death and decomposition of body tissue due to poor circulation in the toes and fingertips. Raynaud's Phenomenon is an amplification of the constriction or dilation of blood vessels responding to very cold conditions or stressful situations.

Symptoms

When you have Raynaud's Phenomenon you may experience some or all of the following:

- Pain
- Discoloration
- Numbness or Cold Sensation

Risk Factors

- Male or Female
  - Primarily Raynaud's affects more women than men.
- Age
  - Raynaud's usually begins between the ages of 15 and 30.
- Climate
  - The disease is also more common in people who live in colder climates.
- Genetics
  - Furthermore, family history seems to increase your risk of primary Raynaud's. About one-third of people with primary Raynaud's also have a relative - parent, sibling or child - with the disease.

Preparing for Podiatrist Appointment

Your Podiatrist will be able to diagnose Raynaud's based on your signs and symptoms. Although, you may be referred to a rheumatologist (a doctor who specializes in disorders of the joints, bones, and muscles).

- Bring in a list of your symptoms
Your podiatrist will want to know when the condition started and what triggers its presence.

- Other medical conditions you have
  - Your podiatrist will be very interested in your past history. Especially if it includes Scleroderma, Lupus, or Sjogren's Syndrome.

- Bring a list of your prescriptions
  - Include all over-the-counter medications you're taking, as well as all vitamins and herbs, too.

- Bring questions!
  - Come up with a list of questions ahead of time to make the most of your time with the podiatrist.