## Tools and adaptive gadgets to make life easier and relieve your scleroderma symptoms

As a person with scleroderma you know firsthand that there are days when doing even the simplest of tasks can be a struggle. Opening jars, putting on socks, buttoning a shirt or even eating your food can become an obstacle. Life with scleroderma does not need to be difficult! You can face each day with fewer hindrances by using products that will enable tasks to be less challenging.

Below is a list of products, tools, and some tips that can be used to alleviate discomfort in scleroderma and other auto-immune patients. Look over these products and determine which ones fit your current needs and continue to check back as your needs may change. The most important thing to remember is that by using adaptive tools you are helping to provide yourself with a quality of life and you are becoming a better advocate for yourself. Congratulations for taking these steps to better manage your scleroderma and to helping to improve your day to day activities. Many of the pictures in this section are used with permission from <a href="https://www.activeforever">www.activeforever</a>; however see the Resources for Assistive Devices for other ideas.

## **EATING**

Oxo Good Grips Utensils—these utensils are designed to help scleroderma patients who have difficulty using thinner kitchen utensils. Patient tip: Dishwasher safe, can be purchased at <a href="https://www.activeforever.com">www.activeforever.com</a>, <a href="https://www.oxo.com/AboutOXO.aspx">http://www.oxo.com/AboutOXO.aspx</a>



Picture from www.activeforever.com

Oxo also makes cooking utensils which can be purchased from the websites or at Walmart and Target stores or other similar stores





Food Bumpers or plate guards—fits on plate to stop food from falling off the plate

**Patient tip:** Dishwasher safe, not recommended for use in a microwave. Can be purchased at www.activeforever.com

Picture from www.activeforever.com



#### **BATHING AND DRESSING**

**Bathtub Transfer Benches** - <a href="https://www.activeforever.com/transfer-benches">https://www.activeforever.com/transfer-benches</a> Assists patients with getting in and out of the tub.



Pictures from www.activeforever.com



Long handle body sponges or back scrubbers – <a href="www.activeforever.com">www.activeforever.com</a>
<a href="http://www.arthritissupplies.com/body-care-long-handle-body-washer.html">http://www.arthritissupplies.com/body-care-long-handle-body-washer.html</a>
<a href="www.activeforever.com">Non slip grip for arthritic hands</a>

Pictures from www.activeforever.com





**Sock Aids**—sock aids assist people who have trouble bending down to put their socks on or if you have ulcers on your fingers and you are finding it difficult to place socks on and off of your feet without the use of an adaptive tool.

**Patient tip:** The more socks you slide onto the aid the better you are in pulling the sock all the way up. Can be purchased at <a href="https://www.ncmedical.com">www.activeforever.com</a> or <a href="https://www.ncmedical.com">https://www.ncmedical.com</a>





**Button Hook**—the button hook makes buttoning your shirt easier. It also has a flexible handle for easy grasping. Can be found at <a href="https://www.ncmedical.com">www.activeforever.com</a> and <a href="http://www.ncmedical.com">http://www.ncmedical.com</a>

For a scleroderma patient, this adaptive tool can make get dressed so much easier and quicker.



**Ring Zipper Puller**—assists patients with zipping their clothing, can be used on a number of items and purchased on <a href="www.amazon.com">www.amazon.com</a> or <a href="http://www.ncmedical.com">http://www.ncmedical.com</a>. Hooks can be put on the end of dowel sticks or button hooks to help with zippers. Can be found at <a href="http://www.ncmedical.com">http://www.ncmedical.com</a>





**Long Shoe Horn** – Shoe horn with 24 inch long handle. Assists with putting your shoes on, can be purchased at <a href="https://www.Amazon.com">www.Amazon.com</a> or <a href="https://www.activeforever.com">www.activeforever.com</a>



Picture from www.activeforever.com

**Magnetic Jewelry Clasps** – Add to existing jewelry – makes jewelry easy to open and close <a href="http://www.arthritissupplies.com/magnetic-jewelry-safety-clasp.html">http://www.arthritissupplies.com/magnetic-jewelry-safety-clasp.html</a>

**Denco Nail Clippers and Tweezers** – wide ergonomic handle to make clipping nails easier or using tweezers easier. Can be purchased at www.aidsforarthritis.com/catalog/product339.html or www.Amazon.com





## GETTING UP FROM CHAIRS AND BEDS, TOILETS, CARS

Raised toilet seats can make it easier to get on and off the toilet. These fit right over the toilet bowl. Some have grab bars connected to the seat; others do not. You can purchase these at home supplies' stores, Wal-Mart, Walgreens etc. You can also get grab bars mounted on the walls next to the toilet but make sure you have bars mounted by a professional.





**Bed or Chair Risers** – to raise the head section of the bed – helps with reflux issues, breathing issues, snoring. If you have GI issues, this is a great item to use to help elevate your bed!

Patient tip: can be found at Home Depot, Bed Bath and Beyond, Wal-Mart, etc.

Lift chairs are also a possibly but much more expensive. Sometime insurance will pay for these

#### Lift chair









# HOME MANAGEMENT: COOKING, CLEANING, OPENING CONTRAINERS, ETC

**Long Handed Dust Pan and Broom**—helps patients when sweeping so that you don't have to bend down.

Patient tip: Helps with back pain and can be purchased at www.activeforever.com



Picture from <u>www.activeforever.com</u>

**Spin and Peel Apple Peeler—found at <u>www.activeforever.com</u>**. Easily removes apple skin without the hassle.



Picture from www.activeforever.com

#### **OPENING CONTAINERS**

**Zim Wall Mounted Jar Opener**—can opener is used to assist patients in opening cans without hurting your wrist or fingers. Can be purchased at <a href="www.activeforever.com">www.activeforever.com</a> or <a href="www.activeforever.com">www.activeforever.com</a> or <a href="www.activeforever.com">www.activeforever.com</a> or <a href="www.activeforever.com">www.activeforever.com</a> or their fingers or tightening hands.



Picture from www.activeforever.com

Other jar openers- available from <a href="www.Amazon.com">www.ebay.com</a>



5 in 1 All purpose opener



Martha-Stewart-multi-size-bottle-jar-opener



Pop 'n Pull Can Opener

**Dycem Bottle Opener Grip**—designed to help alleviate any discomfort while opening bottles.

Patient tip: Can be used on any size bottle.



Picture from www.activeforever.com

**Dycem Pill Bottle Opener Grip**—designed to fit over all medicine caps and help with easing pain, order online at <a href="https://www.activeforever.com">www.activeforever.com</a>

**Patient tip:** Alternative method-you can ask your pharmacist not to put a childproof cap on and suggest using a regular pill cap.



Picture from <u>www.activeforever.com</u>

**Non-slip Rubber Shelf Covering**—can be purchased at home supplies' stores, Wal-Mart, etc.

**Patient tip**: can be cut in strips to use as jar openers, door openers and can be wrapped around utensil handles to make gripping them easier



**Rubber circular tubes with Holes in the Center** – Can get with different sized holes and can be cut to needed lengths. Can be found in hardware or home goods stores. If the hole is too big or if utensil slips, wrap the handle with duck tape or rubber maid rubber shelf covering.

Patient tip: Slip around wooden spoons or any utensil handle to make gripping easier





## Door knob openers

**Door Gripper**—fits over round door handles to make them easier to grip and open. This can help scleroderma patients open doors much easier and also works in the bathroom or kitchen over the faucet.

Door knobs can also be replaced by lever style door handles. Lever handles can be found in hardware type stores.

Patient tip: Can also be used over faucets, found at www.arthritissupplies.com





**Juvo 32" Reacher** - extended handle gripper - <a href="http://www.arthritissupplies.com/juvo-32-inch-reacher.html">http://www.arthritissupplies.com/juvo-32-inch-reacher.html</a>



#### **MOBILITY**

**Walkers or powered scooters** can help if you get fatigued easily or have to walk long distances. Sometimes you can rent scooters at grocery stores, zoos and other places. Walkers can be found at many pharmacies. Scooters often require a doctor's prescription and sometimes insurance will pay for them.





**Easy-Reach-Seatbelt Handle** – extends seat belt 6 inches – snaps over seat belt and makes it easier to reach without turning and twisting - <a href="http://www.arthritissupplies.com/easy-reach-seat-belt-handle.html">http://www.arthritissupplies.com/easy-reach-seat-belt-handle.html</a>



**Key Turners** – handle that attaches to keys to make them easier to hold and turn. There are all types of different styles. Can be found at <a href="https://www.arthiritssupplies.com">www.arthiritssupplies.com</a>, <a href="https://www.activeforever.com">www.ncmedical.com</a>





**Handy Bar** – fits into car door to make getting into and out of the car easier - <a href="http://www.arthritissupplies.com/handybar-helps-getting-in-and-out-of-a-car.html">http://www.arthritissupplies.com/handybar-helps-getting-in-and-out-of-a-car.html</a> and www.activeforever.com



Picture from <u>www.activeforever.com</u>

**Luggage Wraps** – Cushioned wraps that go around luggage handles for improved handling – available in other colors - <a href="http://www.amazon.com/Handle-Wrap-Set-Color-Green/dp/B004AWVXXM/ref=sr\_1\_2?s=apparel&ie=UTF8&qid=1433262513&sr=1-2&keywords=luggage+handle+wraps">http://www.amazon.com/Handle-Wrap-Set-Color-Green/dp/B004AWVXXM/ref=sr\_1\_2?s=apparel&ie=UTF8&qid=1433262513&sr=1-2&keywords=luggage+handle+wraps</a>



#### **OTHER IDEAS**

**Pillows to raise head or legs - Wedge Pillows**—these pillows are used to help those with breathing problems, troubling sleeping due to acid reflex, or back and neck pain. They are comfortable and easy to use in various rooms in your home.

Patient tip: Can be used to elevate your legs as well. Found at <a href="https://www.activeforever.com">www.activeforever.com</a>





Picture from www.activeforever.com

**Thermal Foot Warmers**—designed for both men and women to help patients with aching, tired and cold feet. This product can become a scleroderma and Raynaud sufferer's best friend and provide comfort when your feet become cold and tired.

Patient tip: Can go in the microwave to warm feet up, purchased at www.activeforever.com



Picture from www.activeforever.com

**Heated socks**- these use batteries. Can be found at discount stores



**Hand/Foot Warmers-** Air heated packs that stay hot for up to 8 hours. Found at www.activeforever.com, Walmart, walgreens, or in sporting goods stores

**Patient tip**: Can be put in gloves, pockets, and in slippers, shoes or socks. Great no matter where you live! Perfect to take to the grocery store to help with your shopping trip.





**Paraffin machines** - heat penetrates hands and feet and eases pain. Can be found at Walmart, walgreen's, pharmacies etc.



**Wristies (Sleeves)** - Keeps wrist and fingers warm comes in various lengths. You can put hand warmers in them, too. Can be purchased at <a href="https://www.amazon.com">www.wristies.com</a>



### Ideas for pencils/ pens

**Pencil Grips**—plastic grips that slide onto regular pencils and skinny pencils. <a href="http://www.amazon.com/Pencil-Grip-Universal-Ergonomic-TPG-11106/dp/B001SN8HOY/ref=sr\_1\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1433265524&sr=8-1&keywords=pen+grips+for+arthritis">http://www.amazon.com/Pencil-Grip-Universal-Ergonomic-TPG-11106/dp/B001SN8HOY/ref=sr\_1\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1433265524&sr=8-1&keywords=pen+grips+for+arthritis</a>



#### **Super Big Fat Pens**

Used for patients with arthritis and hand pain – check your local office supply stores



**Outside Faucet Turner**—used to help turn off the water valve outside with ease. Can be purchased at <a href="www.aidsforarthritis.com">www.aidsforarthritis.com</a>



## FINAL THOUGHTS

Every product on this list will only work if you try it. Don't focus on the fact that you are now in need of an adaptive aid, focus on the positive aspect, there is an adaptive aid that can help make your life easier and more productive. You can also do a search for assistive devices or look on Amazon.