

Stressed? Why You Need Reiki

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This gentle, nontoxic technique may restore calm and balance to your body, helping to reduce stress and anxiety using a hands-off biofield energy healing approach

Reiki is a form of biofield energy therapy during which life force energy is channeled to a recipient for healing purposes. "A treatment feels like a wonderful glowing radiance that flows through and around you," the International Center for Reiki Training explains,^[1] and this feeling comes not from the reiki practitioner but from the restoration of balance to the recipient's energy field.

Meanwhile, stress has been described as "the health epidemic of the 21st century" by the World Health Organization,^[2] and many Americans report living in a type of "survival mode," plagued by worries over rises in prices of everyday items like gas, energy and food, supply chain issues and global uncertainty.^[3]

Over the last two years, many have turned to unhealthy habits to deal with stress, including drinking more alcohol, while sleep disturbances have increased and physical activity has declined.^[4] It's the perfect storm for an increase in mental and physical health problems, but one that can be remedied, at least in part, by tending to stress before it snowballs out of control. **Reiki** [3] is one powerful modality that can do just that.

Reiki Heals on an Energetic Level

Humans are energetic beings and produce measurable electrical and magnetic fields. The heart, for instance, uses an electrical field that can be measured through an electrocardiogram to regulate its beat. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans also use the body's magnetic field to produce soft tissue images.^[4]

These examples help to make the abstract idea of reiki more concrete, and quantum physics may also uncover some of its mystery, particularly as physicists have found that extremely small particles have unpredictable tendencies, including the ability to exist in two places at once.^[5] - helping to explain how distance reiki healing may work. According to researchers with the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing,^[6]

"The measurement of human biofield energy demonstrates the existence of human-generated biomagnetic energy. The similarities in the behavior of quantum particles and Reiki energy require more study, however repeated physics experiments with thought-driven particles united with the measurement of human biofield energy suggests that Reiki energy may consist of quantum particles that may lead to a validated theory of Reiki therapy."

Reiki Reduces Caregiver Stress

Caregivers for people with chronic health problems such as cancer face high levels of chronic stress that may hinder immune function and accelerate aging while promoting inflammatory conditions, immune diseases, obesity, insulin resistance and more. Faced with unchecked stress, caregivers may also become unable to optimally care for their loved one in need. Even under extreme stress conditions such as this, reiki can be effective.

In one study, 42 women who were primary caregivers of patients with cancer received reiki to nine points on their body for 45 minutes, once a week for six weeks, or a placebo treatment.^[7] Stress levels, as measured by the Caregiver Strain Index, declined in the reiki group, as did **blood pressure levels and pulse rate** [4] before and after treatments. Stress scores in the reiki group decreased by 32% compared to scores before the sessions began.^[8]

"I felt a positive flow of energy in my body, in my thoughts, and in my mind. Reiki made me think positively and calmly," said one 52-year-old study participant.^[9] The reiki group also reported that the caring process felt less stressful after the sessions and some of their physical complaints also improved.

"Even after the first session, my complaints of constipation that continued for days have decreased," a 31-year-old reiki recipient explained. "After the fourth session, my menstrual period returned after two months. I have never been so surprised at anything in my life!"^[10] Other studies also support reiki's impressive role in reducing caregiver stress, as well as benefitting the patients in their care, including.^[11]

- Six weeks of reiki significantly reduced **stress** [5], with benefits persisting one year later
- Among caregivers, 88% found their patients' comfort and relaxation improved after reiki sessions
- Stress scores decreased by 24% after reiki sessions, compared with baseline stress levels

Reiki Provides Calm, Relieves Anxiety

Reiki is a useful technique to reduce stress at all stages of life and has been found to improve quality of life.^[12] and reduce anxiety^[13] when applied after massage. It's also known to relieve pain, decrease anxiety and depression and improve quality of life among patients receiving medical care.^[14]

"When administered with standard therapy, Reiki is reported to be a low-risk, cost-free, easy-to-apply method that improves well-being in many areas, such as in reducing anxiety and stress and improving quality of life," researchers noted in *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*.^[15] It facilitates both physical and mental relaxation and health, in part, by.^[16]

- Maintaining proper blood and lymph circulation
- Stimulating the autonomic nervous system, which regulates blood pressure and pulse rate
- Increasing comfort

There are several degrees of reiki practice. First degree practitioners use light touch to treat themselves and others, while second degree reiki practitioners are able to use distance healing, channeling energy to people who are physically far away. Third-level reiki practitioners are considered masters and are able to teach others reiki techniques.^[17]

This means that, once you learn the practice, it's possible to relieve your own stress by using self-reiki. In fact, in a study of 20 college students, a significant reduction in stress levels was found among those using self-reiki and, in all cases but one, the stress improvements continued for at least 20 weeks.^[18]

If you're feeling **stressed out and anxious** [6], adding reiki to your healing arsenal may provide the sense of calm and balance that you've been missing.

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