

June is Cancer Survivor's Month



Reiki and Cancer Research

If you're looking for anecdotal evidence of the benefits of Reiki for cancer, you'll find an abundant amount. You may know someone in your family or extended circle who has benefitted from Reiki sessions. Or, if you are a Reiki Practitioner, no doubt you have many success stories of the benefits of Reiki. But there are also scientific studies and statistics that help to raise awareness of the power of Reiki. Research on Reiki for oncology patients has received increased interest lately and the topic has been on researchers' minds for at least the past 25 years. There have been an increasing number of studies published in recent years.

Reiki Cancer Research Through the Years

One of the earliest pieces of published research was a [1997 study](#) in the "Cancer Prevention and Control Discussion Paper Series." It looked at the feasibility of Reiki for managing pain caused by cancer and other issues.

The pilot study involved 20 volunteers, all of whom showed a "highly significant" reduction in pain following their Reiki treatments. If you are a professional Reiki Practitioner, this may confirm what you know to be true from your experiences with your own clients in your practice.

Reiki for Cancer Patients Reduces Pain

A [2003 article](#) published in the "Journal of Pain and Symptom Management" compared the effects of rest against the effects of Reiki for reducing pain and improving quality of life. Reiki won out.

A total of 24 advanced cancer patients were randomly assigned to receive either:

- A standard opioid plus rest
- A standard opioid plus Reiki

Those who received the Reiki reported a significant reduction in pain and improved quality of life compared to those who received only rest.

Reiki for Oncology Patients Decreases Anxiety and Pain

A [2011 article](#) in the “American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (R)” looked at the role of Reiki for oncology patients in the areas of pain, anxiety and overall wellness. The three-year study involved 118 cancer patients who received at least one Reiki session and a subgroup of 22 participants who received the full series of four sessions.

The study found Reiki sessions were helpful for improving:

- Well-being
- Relaxation
- Pain relief
- Quality of sleep
- Anxiety levels

Participants who received all four Reiki sessions for cancer treatments showed the most significant reductions in pain and anxiety, supporting the idea that Reiki produces cumulative effects when a series of treatments are received.

Researchers here concluded, “Offering Reiki therapy in hospitals could respond to patients’ physical and emotional needs.”

Reiki for Breast Cancer Enhanced with Positive Mindset

A [2017 study](#) published in “Anticancer Research” examined the effects of a positive mindset on breast cancer patients who received Reiki as a complementary therapeutic intervention. It specifically wanted to determine if self-efficacy for coping with cancer had any effect on the results of Reiki treatments for pre-surgery cancer patients. It did.

Patients who had higher levels of confidence in a positive outcome showed a more powerful effect of the Reiki treatment on their anxiety levels as well as their overall mood.

In addition to highlighting the positive effects of Reiki for cancer, this study underscored the importance of a positive mindset for coping with cancer-related stressors.

Literature Review

A [2014 literature review](#) wanted to look at the effects of Reiki on anxiety and pain, and researchers were only able to find seven studies that fit their criteria.

- Four articles looked at Reiki for cancer patients
- One studied Reiki for post-surgical patients
- Two examined Reiki for older adults

While the sample size was small, the importance of the conclusion is paramount. The authors surmised Reiki could be helpful for pain and anxiety.

Nearly all the closing statements in the studies examining Reiki for cancer mentioned the same thing: a need for more research. While scientists may feel the compelling need for more studies, cancer patients don’t have to wait. They can try Reiki for themselves to start reaping the benefits immediately.

Thank you IARP <https://iarp.org/reiki-and-cancer-research/>