

REIKI THERAPY



What is Reiki?

Reiki is a Japanese healing art that was developed by Mikao Usui in Japan in the early 20th century. It is pronounced ray-key. You might also hear it called Reiki energy, Usui system of Reiki and therapeutic touch.

The Japanese word reiki means universal energy. Eastern medicine systems work with this energy, which they believe flows through all living things and is vital to well being. The energy is known as 'Ki' in Japan, 'Chi' in China and 'prana' in India. Reiki isn't part of any type of religion or belief system.

How Reiki Works

Reiki operates on the assumption that a universal life force sustains all living organisms and that an energetic and spiritual dimension exists in humans as part of the healing process.

The theory behind Reiki is that by balancing these energies, the body's natural healing ability is stimulated. The focus is on healing, particularly through the spirit and mind-body connection, rather than a cure or treatment of specific conditions or diseases.

Reiki is a spiritual healing art and a type of biofield energy therapy. During a session, a Reiki practitioner lightly places their hands on the person, or sometimes just above them, to direct energy and help the body heal itself. A reiki practitioner aims to change and balance the 'energy fields' in and around your body to get rid of any energy blocks to encourage healing and strengthen your energy. You might feel a tingling sensation, a deep relaxation, or warmth or coolness throughout your body. Or, you might not feel anything at all. Practitioners say this doesn't mean the treatment isn't working.

A typical Usui Reiki session lasts about 45 to 90 minutes. There is no established optimal number of Reiki sessions. Typically, three sessions are recommended to start, but this number can vary depending on many factors.

During the session, the person receiving Reiki usually lies down. Then, the practitioner gently places their hands on (with the person's consent) or just above the clothed person, in at least 12 total positions on the head and the seven main energy centers (chakras).

Symbols, usually drawn onto the practitioner's palm by the palm of the other hand, may be used once a practitioner reaches level 2. These symbols are said to enhance the quality of the transmitted energy and consolidate the benefits of the treatment.

It has been suggested that the positive effects reported by people who have experienced Reiki sessions may come, at least in part, from the state of relaxation it encourages. Reiki may downregulate the autonomic nervous system tone, which relieves tension and anxiety, lowers blood pressure, and elicits a feeling of calm.

Reiki is a complementary approach meant to support conventional medicine, not replace it. It does not treat or cure any medical or health-related condition. There is no high-quality research to support it, though it may reduce pain and anxiety, and support a sense of spiritual connection and well-being.

You might feel thirsty after a session. Most practitioners will advise you to rest and drink plenty of water after treatment and avoid strong caffeine based drinks, such as

coffee. You might feel deeply relaxed, and resting at home afterwards can help you get the full benefit of the treatment.

There are no reports of harmful side effects, but it's important to tell your doctor about any complementary therapy, alternative therapy or diet supplement that you use. Then your doctor will always have the full picture about your care and treatment.

Benefits of Reiki

While not proven concretely, Reiki may help with:

- Relaxation and stress reduction
- Activating the parasympathetic nervous system (reduced heart rate, reduced blood pressure, increased heart rate variability)
- Pain control
- Reduced anxiety and depression and increased self-esteem and quality of life in people with chronic health conditions
- Enhanced well-being and sleep quality
- Symptom management in some conditions, such as cancer⁵
- Stronger sense of connection with self and others
- Enhanced positive thinking

Reiki is a noninvasive and gentle practice with little to no risk of adverse effects. It can be performed in nearly any setting (hospices, surgery rooms) by widely varied healthcare providers and therapy professionals with Reiki training.

There are 3 different levels of reiki practitioners.

- Level 1 means you can use reiki to treat yourself, family and friends but are not able to treat other people or charge money for treatment
- Level 2 (also called practitioner level) means you have studied to a higher level and can use reiki to treat people
- Level 3 means you are a reiki master or teacher

Anyone treating you should hold a minimum Level 2 reiki qualification. They should be registered with the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC) as a reiki practitioner.