

# Reiki for



International Association  
of Reiki Professionals



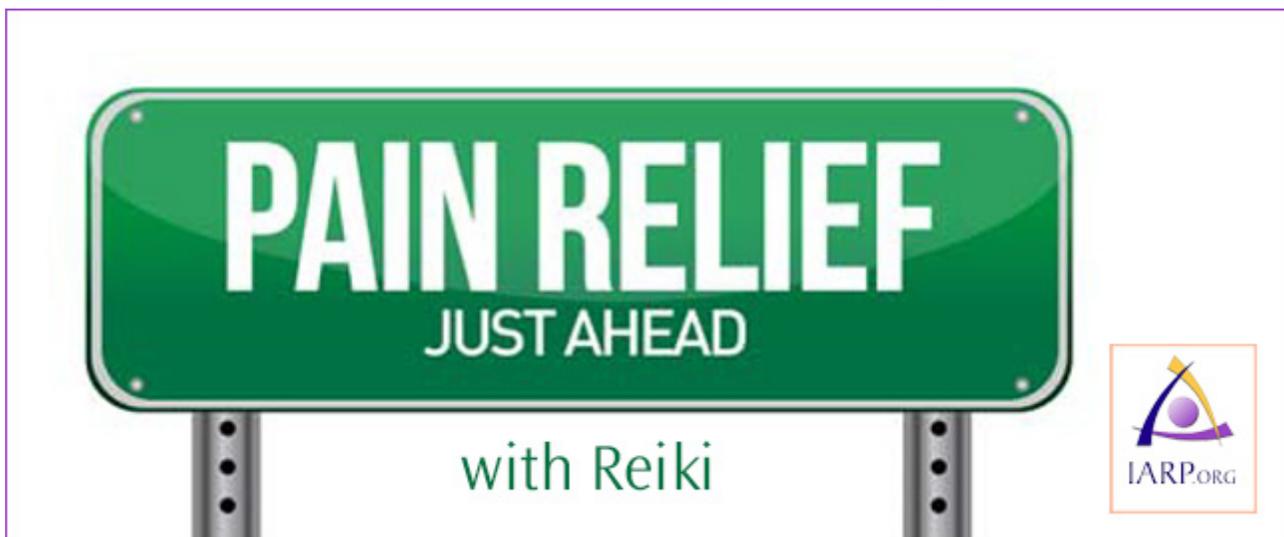
## Reiki and Chronic Pain: Can Reiki Help Heal the Chronic Pain Epidemic?

### Reiki and the Chronic Pain Epidemic

Chronic pain affects more than 100 million Americans, according to a report released by the Institute of Medicine. Another 10 million people suffer from pain on a near-daily basis in Britain, according to The British Pain Society. Those numbers are just for two countries. Imagine what the worldwide numbers are. There is no doubt, then, that chronic pain is a global epidemic that affects millions of lives.

### Chronic Pain: Definition and Costs

Defined as pain that lasts longer than three to six months, chronic pain has become one of the most common reasons for seeking medical attention. In the same report, the Institute of Medicine found that, as of February 2014, chronic pain cost the healthcare system an estimated \$635 billion each year. Most people who suffer from chronic pain are prescribed pain medications. Increasingly, however, alternative solutions like Reiki have also proven helpful. There is still a lot of confusion and lack of education regarding chronic pain, so understanding it is the first step in deciding on choosing the best treatment.



Pain Relief with Reiki

## Understanding Chronic Pain and its Effects on the Body

Some individuals think of chronic pain as acute pain that does not subside. This definition, however, does not quite capture its wide range of manifestations. Chronic pain is a blanket term, but not everyone who suffers from it will have comparable symptoms. According to WebMD, chronic pain may be mild or excruciating. It can also occur continuously or sporadically. While the pain may merely inconvenience some people, others may be completely incapacitated by the pain.

Chronic pain is often described as “burning,” “shooting,” “electrical,” or “aching,” and it can be accompanied by stiffness, soreness, tightness, and discomfort. Over time, it can lead to fatigue, moodiness, or sleeplessness. The source of a sufferer’s chronic pain can be difficult to pinpoint, since a variety of diseases may contribute. It may linger from an old injury, accompany the natural aging process, or even come from poor posture.

But chronic pain can do much more than just interfere with normal, day-to-day life. Researchers at Northwestern University found that it can shrink the brain by 11%, effectively speeding up the brain’s aging process by 10 or 20 years. The effects of chronic pain can also create a vicious cycle. With time, the



Some small studies have been conducted to determine the effectiveness of Reiki. They suggest that patients may use Reiki to find relief from not only the physical aspects of chronic pain, but also the anxiety that often comes with it. According to an article from the University of Minnesota, several studies found that Reiki treatments seem to relax patients, reduce fatigue and depression, and strengthen a person's overall sense of wellbeing.

According to an article by Anthony Schifano on the National Fibromyalgia and Chronic Pain Association's website, Reiki sessions have brought relief and helped individuals feel more balanced. He writes that patients who received Reiki treatment experienced "total relaxation, less tense muscles, and improvement in their range of motion." One patient who suffered with fibromyalgia pain for years was able to stop taking pain-relieving medications after starting regular Reiki treatments.

## Increasing Awareness in the Medical Community

Medical practitioners and patients, as well as researchers, are becoming more aware of the real and lasting proven effects of Reiki when it comes to treating chronic pain. Reiki succeeds because it works on a deeper level, influencing the flow of healing energy that promotes a sense of balance and leads to pain relief in patients suffering from chronic pain from a variety of conditions. Ongoing research and testimonials from patients have shown that an integrative, individualized approach works best. Chronic pain and its accompanying treatments are still being researched; Reiki is crucial for this research. When discussing chronic pain, combining medication with exercise, acupuncture, and Reiki may potentially bring about the highest level of pain relief.

\*\*This article appeared in The Reiki Times, the official magazine of the International Association of Reiki Professionals.

**Like This Article? JOIN IARP – Click to become a Professional Member today!**



