



Reiki and Heart Disease

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Cardiovascular diseases are currently the number one cause of death worldwide, according to the World Health Organization. Approximately 17.5 million people died from these illnesses just in 2012, and the number continues to increase with each passing year. Because of the severity of these diseases, it is important for anyone who is at risk of heart disease or has already been diagnosed with heart disease to do what they can to improve the health of the cardiovascular system. For people interested in natural, non-invasive treatment options, Reiki has proven to be a valuable tool.

Why is Heart Disease So Serious?

Most heart disease is related to atherosclerosis, which is a condition that occurs when plaque builds up on the inner walls of the arteries. If enough plaque accumulates, it becomes difficult for blood to flow through the vessel. When blockages become severe, heart attacks and/or strokes can occur. If severe or untreated, heart attacks can lead to heart failure, heart rupture and abnormal heart rhythms. Likewise, severe and/or untreated strokes can lead to paralysis, memory loss, pain and behavioral changes. Either of these conditions also has the potential to be fatal.

How Can Reiki Help Heart Disease Patients?

Reiki is a form of therapy that utilizes the natural flow of energy within the body to facilitate healing. Those who engage in Reiki treatments seek to dissolve energy blockages and disruptions in energy flow that may be contributing to illnesses and pain. For individuals with heart disease or a risk of heart disease, the goal of these treatments is to improve the health of the heart and the circulatory system, alleviate symptoms associated with the condition and improve the individual's overall quality of life.

When an individual undergoes Reiki treatment, he or she rests in a seated or supine position while a practitioner places his or her hands in specific positions. The practitioner may place his or her hands slightly above the client, or the practitioner may touch the client gently. During most Reiki sessions, the practitioner will utilize up to 15 different positions, each of which will be held for two to five minutes.



Improved Sleep.

Research has shown that people with poor sleep habits are at a higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Reiki may improve the quality of sleep, thus reducing the risk of heart disease. Improved sleep is also beneficial to patients who have already been diagnosed with a heart problem.

Reduction in pain sensations.

People with heart disease, as well as those who have already experienced a stroke or heart attack, may feel pain because of their condition. Patients who undergo Reiki treatments often report a reduction in pain sensations. Thus, Reiki may be beneficial to heart patients for this reason.

Research on Reiki and Heart Disease

Researchers have explored the effect of Reiki on patients with a variety of different conditions, including heart disease. Some of the studies that have explored the relationship between Reiki and this condition include:

Yale's Study on Reiki and Heart Attack Patients

A study performed by researchers at Yale University sought to determine whether Reiki treatments were beneficial to patients who had suffered a heart attack three days prior. The study broke patients into three groups: one group that rested quietly, a second group that listened to meditative music and a third group that underwent Reiki treatment. The group that underwent Reiki treatment experienced the greatest amount of change in heart rate variability of the three groups. Members of the Reiki group also experienced a more significant improvement in mental state than members of the other two groups in the study. These results indicate that Reiki may aid in the healing process and improve the prognosis of the patient following a heart attack.

A Review of Reiki Studies Involving Pain and Anxiety

In 2014, researchers at the University of Pittsburgh set out to review past studies that had been conducted to evaluate the effect of Reiki treatments on pain and anxiety. The researchers reviewed a total of seven studies and found that the majority of studies showed a statistically significant improvement in both pain and anxiety among patients who had participated in Reiki treatment sessions. However, researchers also indicated that further research on this topic should be performed.

Beginning Reiki Treatments

If you have a history of heart problems, or if you possess one or more risk factors for the development of heart disease, adding Reiki to your treatment or preventative regimen may be beneficial. The research supports the ability of Reiki to improve factors associated with heart health, as well as the uncomfortable symptoms experienced after a cardiac event. In addition, because Reiki is a non-invasive treatment option, the risk of complications and side effects from this type of therapy is extremely low.

To learn more about Reiki or to schedule your first session, you may [utilize the IARP website to find a registered Reiki practitioner in your area.](#)

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



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