

Biofield Therapy and Reiki

Biofield therapy, also known as energy healing, is one of the most widespread of complementary therapies, according to Wayne B. Jonas, M.D., former director of the National Institutes of Health's National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine. An increasing number of nurses, physicians and hospitals have begun integrating biofield healing therapies such as Reiki into patient care. Energy healing works equally well on animals and the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association lists nearly 100 members as incorporating Reiki, one of the most well-known forms of energy healing, in their practice.

Reiki is a Japanese form of stress reduction and energy healing that can be translated to mean "Universal Life Force Energy." Reiki is thousands of years old, and is thought to have originated as a Tibetan Buddhist practice that was rediscovered in the late 1800's by Dr. Mikao Usui, a Japanese Buddhist. It is a non-intrusive method of hands on healing that taps into the energy referred to as Ki in Japanese. The ability to work with Reiki is passed down from Master to student through a series of initiations; the practitioner acts as a conduit for this energy to flow to a client and facilitate their physical, emotional, mental and spiritual healing. The energy channels are opened to allow the body to deal properly and naturally with both stress and the build-up of toxins.

Michigan hospitals which offer Reiki to patients include the University of Michigan Integrative Medicine Clinic, the Wege Institute at St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Rapids as well as South Haven Community Hospital's Shoreline Center for Women. Nurses receive CEUs for taking Reiki classes. Reiki is considered a complementary holistic therapy to be used in conjunction with [never in place of] traditional medicine.

What happens in a session?

During an energy healing session with animals, the practitioner can either lay hands gently on or slightly above the animal's body. Reiki can also be offered from a few feet away or from outside a cage.

Benefits of energy healing

Hospitals around the country report a number of benefits from Reiki including reduced anxiety, lower use of pain medications and faster recuperation from surgery and injury. It works equally well on animals. In shelter situations, fearful and seemingly unadoptable animals can be calmed and find homes. Energy healing is very gentle and non-invasive; there's no physical manipulation or massage involved.