

The Benefits of Reiki for Seniors: Caring for Our Aging Parents and Elders



Many seniors struggle with age-related discomforts that can significantly reduce their quality of life. Arthritis brings pain and stiffness to joints, injuries and surgeries can be slow to heal, and everyday life as a senior can be incredibly stressful. Fortunately, Reiki may help alleviate many of these discomforts associated with senior life.

Millions of people of all ages have enjoyed the benefits of Reiki, finding relief from pain, anxiety, indigestion, and insomnia that can lessen the quality of life. Sadly, many seniors have missed out on the therapeutic benefits of Reiki. Some have not heard of the approach while others shy away because they do not fully understand or appreciate the complementary healing potential of this gentle approach.

The Healing Power of Touch

The growing numbers of seniors who have tried Reiki respond quickly to it – most seniors become enthusiastic about the treatment after only one session. Reiki helps chemotherapy patients relax, for example, or feel more comfortable after a surgical procedure. The healing power of touch brings the warmth of Reiki energy into stiff shoulders or sore feet, even for seniors who are normally sensitive to touch.

Most seniors enjoy Reiki and look forward to sessions – the dim lights, soothing music, and comfortable atmosphere are appealing. Some seniors say they feel the benefits of Reiki immediately after a session while others say it takes a few days for the therapeutic effects to appear. A handful of seniors say they feel no benefit, but their family members and caretakers can notice improvements in the individual's physical appearance or mood.

Depending on the individual's mindset and physical condition, seniors may benefit from short Reiki sessions at first then move into full 60-minute sessions as their body learns how to open itself and accept treatment.

Benefits of Reiki for Seniors and Elder Care

Reiki helps loosen muscle tension, stimulates circulation, and soothes the nervous system. Seniors respond to Reiki because of the way it relieves pain from tight muscles, increases range of motion in arthritic or stiff joints, and even improves coordination to reduce the risk for falls and fall-related injuries. Reiki can speed healing from injuries and surgery, ease breathing, boost vitality, and rejuvenate energy and mental alertness.

This complementary therapy can provide benefits in ways seniors may not expect but certainly appreciate, including relief from itchy and dry skin, a more restful sleep, increased vitality, and mental alertness. Reiki can even foster a sense of contentment that can seem out of reach for seniors, especially those who struggle with serious health issues, chronic illnesses, depression, and mental health problems.

Patients with dementia can often benefit from touch when more traditional approaches cannot reach them. [UCLA](#) says there is one study that showed Reiki reduces stress, anxiety, and depression responses – three conditions that affect many seniors, especially those with dementia.

Reiki Brings Peace and Calm

Reiki helps to bring peace and calm to an advanced senior's or elder's world, sometimes filled with pain, disability, foggy memory, never-ending doctor appointments, and other problems that make even the smallest activity of daily living seem like a monumental challenge. These challenges have a profoundly disruptive effect on the flow of the older adult's life force energy and, left unaddressed, can even exacerbate illness and dysfunction. The Reiki technique helps to reestablish proper energy flow to improve the health and wellbeing of older adults.

Reiki Helps Ease Pain

Reiki may even help ease pain and reduce the need for painkillers. One [study](#) showed that Reiki could reduce patients' need for the analgesic, meperidine, during colonoscopy. Researchers in that study reviewed the charts of 300 colonoscopy patients and determined that each patient received more than 50 mg of meperidine. The scientists then recruited 30 patients to participate in a new study. Twenty-five subjects participated in Reiki while five engaged in placebo Reiki before undergoing the colonoscopy procedure. The scientists found that 16 percent of those who received Reiki required less than 50 mg of meperidine.

Reiki is a Complementary Therapy

Fortunately, it is not an "either-or" relationship between Reiki and medical treatments – Reiki works in harmony with other treatments for age-related conditions. Reiki is a complementary therapy that enhances the therapeutic properties of medicines and medical techniques while optimizing the natural healing process that has slowed for many adults. In some cases, Reiki can even act as a catalyst for healing when the therapeutic benefits of standard medical approaches seem to come to a standstill.

Many medical professionals acknowledge the healing powers of Reiki. In fact, more than 800 hospitals in the USA now offer Reiki training as a means to accelerate the healing process and alleviate pain because these medical professionals now recognize the benefits of Reiki for seniors.

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