

# How Reiki Can Help with Arthritis Pain

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## About Reiki and Arthritis

Arthritis is a common, painful condition that affects people all over the world. Traditional medicine typically cannot cure arthritis, but patients may be able to manage their symptoms through medications, physical therapy and other treatments. Many patients have also found that supportive treatments like Reiki may help improve their condition and comfort over time.

## How Arthritis Affects the Body

Two primary types of arthritis exist: rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis. While rheumatoid arthritis is a systemic disease that typically develops between the ages of 20 and 40, osteoarthritis is a degenerative joint disease that develops in older people. Both of these conditions are characterized by stiffness, inflammation and pain in the joints. Both rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis also tend to worsen over time.



## **Benefits of Reiki for People with Arthritis**

Reiki may help people dealing with arthritis in several different ways. Some of the benefits of Reiki for people with this condition include:

### **Reduced Sensations of Pain**

One of the most significant problems faced by people with arthritis is ongoing pain. For many people, this pain makes it impossible to keep a job, participate in any hands-on recreational activity or even enjoy life. Regular Reiki treatments have been shown to reduce perceptions of pain, which may improve the overall quality of life for an individual suffering from arthritis. With less pain, arthritis sufferers may also find that they don't need to take as much pain medication in order to remain comfortable.

### **Better Range of Motion**

Another common problem among people with arthritis is stiffness and poor mobility in the joints. Some research studies have shown that Reiki treatments may improve range of motion, allowing these individuals to move their joints more freely and effectively.

### **Improved Mood**

Dealing with pain and stiffness on a daily basis takes a toll on even the most positive person. As a result, many people with arthritis eventually become depressed. Studies have shown that Reiki may improve symptoms of depression for some people. Thus, this type of therapy may be beneficial for arthritis sufferers.

### **Relevant Research**

Several research studies support the effectiveness of Reiki for people with arthritis. Some of these studies are detailed below.

#### **Reiki Improves Range of Motion**

In a study completed by researchers at the University of Arizona, the effect of Reiki on range of motion in people with limited shoulder mobility was evaluated. Range of Motion increased by 20 degrees for subjects treated with Reiki, as opposed to only 12 degrees for people treated with physical therapy.

## **Reiki Reduces Pain**

A study published by the Cross Cancer Institutes explored the ability of Reiki to reduce pain sensations. Researchers measured pain on both the visual analog scale and a Likert scale. Patients participating in the study showed a reduction in pain on both scales when treated with Reiki.

## **Reiki Helps Alleviate Depression**

A third study conducted by researchers at the University of Southern Maine showed that Reiki treatments can help to alleviate both depression and anxiety.

In addition to the results of these studies, Reiki's efficacy for people with arthritis is also supported by anecdotal reports from Reiki participants with this condition. Many people have reported fewer arthritis symptoms as a result of Reiki treatments. In addition, arthritis sufferers have also said that Reiki helped them to feel a greater sense of balance and wellbeing, even as they continue to deal with their condition.

*Sources: <http://www.who.int/chp/topics/rheumatic/en/>, <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/arthritis/home/ovc-20168903>, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3847956/>, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/9765732>*