

Center for Reiki Research Study Summary

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Immediate symptom relief after a first session of massage therapy or Reiki in hospitalized patients; a 5-year clinical experience from a rural academic hospital

Reference

Vergo MT, Pinkson BM, Broglio K, Li Z & Tosteson TD (2018). Immediate symptom relief after a first session of massage therapy or Reiki in hospitalized patients; a 5-year clinical experience from a rural academic hospital. *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*. Apr 5. doi: 10.1089/acm.2017.0409. [Epub ahead of print]

Purpose of Study

To examine the immediate symptom relief from a single Reiki or massage session in a heterogeneous hospitalized population in a rural academic medical center.

Objective/goals/hypotheses

Massage therapy and Reiki if used in hospitalized patients will reduce symptoms of pain, nausea, fatigue, anxiety, depression and improve well being.

Methods

Hospitalized patients, regardless of diagnosis, were referred, or self-referred to one of four Reiki practitioners or four licensed massage therapists for a single session. Subsequently a questionnaire that assessed patient quality of life and symptoms using an 11-point Likert scale was completed by the practitioner with input from the patient. The impact of Reiki or massage on symptoms was determined by comparing scores before and after receiving the session.

Results

Significant symptom relief was reported with both modalities, but Reiki showed statistically greater improvement than massage for fatigue and anxiety.

Strengths

This was a five-year experience in an academic hospital center with a fairly large patient base (675 patients receiving massage and 419 patients receiving Reiki).

Weaknesses

There was no standard protocol for massage therapy or Reiki, and the study did not have a control group.

Additional comments

The venue and size of the study are significant, and encourage further studies of more disciplined scientific methods, including clearly defined protocols and control groups.

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