

## More Cancer Centers and Doctors Encouraging the Use of Reiki

By Jack Bleeker

April 2010

With groups like the Society of Integrative Oncology, a multi-disciplinary organization of professionals, touting the advantages of complementary cancer treatment and recovery, new methodologies, including Reiki are gaining in popularity. More and more cancer centers and oncologists are beginning to recognize the benefits that these treatments – once dismissed with a snicker by those “in-the-know” – are providing for those who just don’t know where to turn to address issues like the pain and stress associated with cancer and its conventional treatments.

Complementary therapies - not to be confused with “alternative” therapies, which are unproven treatments – have gradually made their way to the forefront of cancer care as well-known oncologists who are lauded experts in their field begin to promote these supportive treatments as a natural part of cancer care. Even the National Institutes of Health operates a National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, researching complementary therapies and then recommending proven ones for integration into cancer programs nationwide, including those associated with [mesothelioma](#) cancer.

Lately, the ancient form of spiritual healing known as Reiki (pronounced Ray-kee) has earned plenty of attention as a potential complementary therapy for all kinds of cancer, including mesothelioma. Rooted in Tibetan Buddhism, Reiki was “rediscovered” in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and became particularly popular in the late 1990s as Reiki Masters began to teach non-Buddhists that life energy flows through all persons, this technique strives to increase the life force energy of a sick individual, therefore helping him achieve better health and happiness.

Like many complementary therapies, Reiki takes a holistic approach – treating mind, body, and spirit – and is safe and natural. Many cancer patients who have tried it note an overall feeling of peace, relaxation, and well-being when the treatment is complete. Totally non-invasive, Reiki therapy involves the laying of hands on the fully-clothed patient by the Reiki practitioner. His/her hands travel through 12 different positions, staying in each place for about 5 minutes for a total of about an hour per treatment. The feeling of invigoration or tranquility results from the fact that Reiki causes the body's molecules to vibrate at a higher intensity, hence, dissolving energy blockages that lead to disharmony and disease, Reiki masters note. This assists in controlling pain, easing stress, or lessening side effects of traditional treatments like chemotherapy, including nausea and other debilitating problems for [mesothelioma cancer](#) patients. It is also believed to improve immune function.

With continuous positive reactions from many cancer patients, [mesothelioma clinics](#) such as Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center offer Reiki classes for cancer patients, including Sloan Kettering mesothelioma patients on a regular basis as well as in-service classes for their hospital staff. Other well-known hospitals to jump on the Reiki bandwagon include Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Columbia Presbyterian, the Yale Center, and Cancer Treatment Centers of America. The list continues to grow as patients use tools like the internet to advertise their positive reactions to this ancient healing art, enticing others to give it a try.

### References:

National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicines (<http://nccam.nih.gov/>)  
Society for Integrative Oncology ([www.integrativeonc.org](http://www.integrativeonc.org))  
Chemocare.com, [http://www.chemocare.com/complementary\\_medicine.asp](http://www.chemocare.com/complementary_medicine.asp))  
The International Center for Reiki Training ( [www.reiki.org](http://www.reiki.org))  
Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center ([www.mskcc.org](http://www.mskcc.org))