

University of Minnesota Center for Spirituality and Healing

What is the status of the research?

While the debate on how best to study integrative therapies such as Reiki and Qigong is gaining steam, research attempts have been and continue to be made. Nonetheless, research into Reiki is just beginning. The [National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health](#) (NCCIH) of the [National Institutes of Health](#) (NIH) has completed at least five studies looking at Reiki's ability to benefit people with diabetes, advanced AIDS, prostate cancer, fibromyalgia, and stress.

Other published studies have looked at the effect of Reiki on measures of stress hormones, blood pressure, heart rate, and immune responsivity, and on subjective reports of [anxiety](#), pain and [depression](#). The studies to date are typically small, and not every study is well designed. However, overlapping data from some of the stronger studies support the ability of Reiki to reduce anxiety and pain, and suggest its usefulness to induce relaxation, improve fatigue and depressive symptoms, and strengthen overall wellbeing. The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews contains a review on the use of touch therapies (including Reiki) for pain and a protocol for use of Reiki for psychological symptoms.