

Reiki Research Review

Rubik, B., Brooks, A.J., Schwartz, G.E. *In vitro* effect of Reiki treatment on bacterial cultures: role of experimental context and practitioner wellbeing. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*. 2006; 12(1); 7-13.

This randomised, blinded, controlled study addressed three main questions:

- (1) What are the effects of Reiki on the growth of *in vitro* cultures of growth-challenged bacteria?
- (2) Does “healing context” influence the effects of Reiki on bacterial culture growth?
- (3) Does practitioner well-being influence the effects of Reiki on bacterial culture growth?

The protocol for this study was approved by the University of Arizona, Tucson. In consultation with 3 Reiki practitioners, a treatment room was set up, and electromagnetic radiation minimised in this area. Wild type *E.coli* bacteria were heat shocked for 25 minutes at 49°C just prior to Reiki treatment. Samples were then randomly assigned to the treatment and control groups. Those samples brought to the treatment room were given 15 minutes of Reiki, with the practitioner being given no particular instruction or intention about their task. Before and after, the practitioner completed a questionnaire about their state of well-being.

After treatment, all samples were incubated at 37°C for one hour to facilitate growth, then for 3 minutes at 0°C to stop growth before dilution took place. Overnight samples were incubated again at 37°C, then counting took place under blinded conditions.

In order to see if there was any influence of prior Reiki treatment, some practitioners took part in 30 minute healing treatments on a lady with a badly sprained ankle, prior to their sessions working with the bacteria. 16 practitioners took part in the whole trial, and they were randomly scheduled over several months, always working in the early afternoon. All bacterial samples in the treatment group received three runs without the practitioner doing a prior healing, and two runs after a healing session.

The results showed that the bacteria which were treated straight after a healing treatment was given grew significantly better than those which were given Reiki without a healing context, and that practitioner well-being, as measured by questionnaires before and after every session also had an influence on the success of the treatment. They also found that prior negative feelings by the practitioner correlated with low or even negative growth of the bacteria.

Comment

This study is really important for us as practitioners, in that it highlights the importance of our mental attitude during the giving of a Reiki treatment, as well as in our daily lives. The fact that a healing session given first gave far better results when the practitioner then worked on the bacteria, shows that the more we give Reiki, and work in a loving context with others, the better our results will be.

Additionally, this is an important article to show people who doubt Reiki. A blinded, randomised, controlled trial under proper scientific conditions which gives statistically significant results, and which is replicable is good evidence. More studies of this type need to be undertaken, and it appears that the authors are involved in more Reiki research.

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