



Investigating Perceived Stress and Pain Reduction Following Brief Reiki Sessions in High-Stress Communities: An Exploratory Study

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Objectives: To analyze changes in self-reported stress and pain levels before and after a single, ten-minute Reiki session among high-stress groups in community settings in Chicago.

Methods: In this exploratory study, data from 59 events between September 2022–December 2024 was analyzed to evaluate the impact of ten-minute Reiki sessions on participants' self-reported stress and pain levels. Quantitative measurements were determined using a 1–10 scale accompanied by facial expression visuals to facilitate understanding. For qualitative measures, participants were asked open-ended questions post-intervention such as, "How do you feel?" or "How did that go?" and feedback was recorded. All data were de-identified. No demographic or baseline health information was collected. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and significance testing. Qualitative responses were summarized descriptively and categorized into themes based on word occurrence frequency.

Results: Reiki sessions were provided to 1,724 members of high-stress communities throughout Chicago. The majority of participants reported significant change in stress (72.62% reduction overall) and pain (63.34% reduction overall) following a single ten-minute session. Quantitative results were statistically significant, with a p-value of <0.01 in all categories. Most participants felt very relaxed and reported feeling less pain and profound surprise at the positive outcome post-session.

Conclusion: This study has provided valuable insights into how participants perceive the impact of Reiki in reducing both stress and pain levels among individuals in high-stress communities who received a single, ten-minute Reiki session. Sessions took place in a variety of non-clinical settings.