

Energy Therapy

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What is this?

The concept of a personal energy system is well-established. Without getting into the physics, everyone can relate to the fact that some days we have more energy than others. Energy therapy seeks to balance and heal the personal energy system in subtle ways using an external energy source. Some conventional medicine techniques also rely on the application of external energy to heal the body. Think about a heating pad used to reduce pain.

Many cultures have built sophisticated healing systems on the concept of a circulating personal energetic life force (called, for example, ki, chi, or prana) and other aspects of personal energy. These complex healing systems, used and honed for thousands of years, are the basis for such practices as acupuncture, hands-on healing, chanting, and many other ways of viewing and balancing the body's energy.

"EH [energy healing] is an adjunctive treatment that is noninvasive and poses little downside risk to patients. Well more than 50 major hospitals and clinics throughout the United States offer EH to patients ...Because negative outcomes risk is at or near zero throughout the literature, EH is a candidate for use on many medical conditions." (DiNucci EM, 2005)

There are tens, maybe hundreds of different energetic healing systems, some new and others well-established. This page will, by necessity, provide sample studies for only a few of these systems.

How can this help?

While there have been no specific clinical studies for energy therapy and ITP, there are studies that are related to some aspects of the disease. These studies and the results from [PDSA's Survey on Non-Traditional Treatments of ITP](#) show that energy therapy can have a positive, healing effect on the body.

Acupuncture, the application of small sterilized needles to specific points (which can also be stimulated by pressure, magnets or heat) can alter T-cells, a type of white blood cell. (Yuan, 1993). [Note: ITP is considered a T-cell mediated disease.] Although acupuncture usually employs ultra thin, sterilized needles, no bleeding side effects were observed in those with very low platelet counts (Ladas EJ 2010). Thirty percent of respondents in PDSA's Survey of Non-Traditional Treatments in ITP reported that acupressure and acupuncture increased their platelets or improved their bleeding symptoms with 5% to 10% reporting sustained results. ([Survey Results](#))

Reiki, a Japanese hands-on, energy-therapy system, can reduce stress, increase relaxation, and promote healing. It can also influence the autonomic nervous system, the system that adjusts processes such as heart rate and blood pressure, as well as reduce psychological distress (Mackay 2004, Baldwin 2008, Shore 2004). Nearly 40% of respondents in PDSA's Survey of Non-Traditional Treatments in ITP reported that Reiki increased their platelet count or improved their bleeding symptoms with 9% to 18% reporting sustained results. ([Survey Results](#))

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Energy Therapy: Additional Resources

**National Institutes of Health
National Center for Complementary and
Alternative Medicine**

[Acupuncture](#)

[Reiki](#)

[Qi Gong](#)

Other Resources

[Acupuncture.com](#)
3000 pages of information

[American Music Therapy Association](#)
8455 Colesville Road, Suite 1000
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
(301) 589-3300

[International Body Talk Association](#)
2750 Stickney Pt. Rd
Suite 203
Sarasota, FL 34231

[The International Center for Reiki Training](#)
21421 Hilltop Street, Unit #28
Southfield, Michigan 48033
(800) 332-8112

[Qigong Institute](#)
617 Hawthorne Avenue
Los Altos, CA 94024

Healing Touch helped reduce the stress level and heart rate variability in children with cancer (Kemper KJ 2009). In PDSA's Survey of Non-Traditional Treatments in ITP 21% to 36% reported that Healing Touch increased their platelet count or improved their bleeding symptoms with 6% to 12% reporting sustained results. ([Survey Results](#))

Music and sound therapy have decreased serum IL-4 (an immune regulator) and corticosterone (a stress hormone) in an animal study (Lu 2010) and reduced cd4 and cd8 (immune system proteins) and cortisol (stress hormone) levels in those with an infectious lung disease (le Roux 2007). Participating in music, not just listening, can also positively affect the immune system (Kuhn 2002).

Qigong (or chi kung), directed breathing combined with movement, is used by millions of people in China everyday and has been for centuries. It can increase the number of white blood cells, lower blood pressure and cholesterol, and improve depression, among other things (Ng BH 2009). People doing Qigong exercises in combination with prescribed drugs were able to lower the dosage of their medication (Sancier KM 1999). In a randomized controlled study, medical Qigong reduced inflammation, improved cognitive function, and generally improved the quality of life of cancer patients (Oh 2011).

Risks

There is no known downside risk to the hands-on healing therapies such as Reiki and Healing Touch or breathing therapies such as qigong. Since there is nothing to ingest they do not interfere with medications.

Some serious adverse events have been reported for acupuncture treatment for pain, but the reporting and descriptions were incomplete (Capili B 2010). Sustained loud music can produce buzzing in the ears and hearing loss (Budimčić M 2010). Note that therapeutic music is not administered at a level that can cause hearing damage.

Because energy therapies are individualized and can vary by practitioner, it is important to work with someone who is a licensed or highly trained professional and also very knowledgeable and experienced. PDSA has published [a list of questions that can be helpful for choosing any healthcare provider](#).

Our Experience

"...since starting the acupuncture, I have not taken prednisone for the last four months, and my platelet count has been over 250,000!!!" *Donna*

"I started Reiki last week. It was the most wonderful experience! I have never been so relaxed! I felt wonderful! I had peace and had energy and everything looked brighter. Wow! What an experience!" *Sharon*

"After being treated for ITP for 6 months I quit prednisone, still with an average platelet count of 70 - 90, feeling exhausted, depressed and really miserable. Luckily, a work mate of mine suggested the Bodytalk system. After the third and final session, my count reached the 200 mark. I was overjoyed and really feeling well." *Alex*

Resources

Baldwin AL et al. "Reiki improves heart rate homeostasis in laboratory rats." *J Altern Complement Med*. 2008 May;14(4):417-22 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18435597>

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Sound Healers Association

P.O. Box 2240
Boulder, CO 80306
(303) 443-8181

Practitioners familiar with ITP

[Paul Kempisty \(acupuncture\)](#)

[Pamir Kiciman \(Reiki\)](#)

[Nancy Russell \(Reiki and IET\)](#)

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