

Center for Reiki Research

Study Summary

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The effect of complementary healing therapy on postoperative pain after surgical removal of impacted third molar teeth

Reference

Wirth, D. P., Brenlan, D. R., Levine, R. J. & Rodriguez, C. M. The effect of complementary healing therapy on postoperative pain after surgical removal of impacted third molar teeth. *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*, 1, 133-138, 1993.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the effect of complementary healing therapy, specifically Reiki and LeShan healing at a distance on postoperative pain, after surgical removal of impacted third molar teeth.

Objective/goals/hypotheses

Oral surgery can cause severe pain due to manipulation of bone and tissue. Based on previous data on the effects of complimentary therapies on pain and wound healing, the goal of this study was to examine the effects of healing therapies on pain relief after oral surgery.

Methods

A randomized, double blinded, within-subject crossover study was designed to include 21 patients ages 19-28. Two separate operations were performed in which the control and treatment group were switched. The patients were all prescribed analgesics as well, and the treatment group received both LaShan and Reiki (at a distance) at specific intervals postoperatively. Pain relief was measured at each interval by subjective data from patients, and the data were analyzed statistically.

Results

The study showed that the combination of Reiki and LaShan therapy offered significant pain relief to the participants. Although the study was specific to oral surgery, and the sample size was small, it took into account confounding and bias effects. It also made suggestions for future research to study the effects of complimentary therapies on wound healing and bone reparation, as well as separating the modalities used.

Strengths

The double blind, within subject design ensured that each person received both treatment and non-treatment and were not aware of the order. Since the Reiki and LaShan practitioners were in another building and could not be seen by the subjects, there was no need to use sham practitioners for the control group.

Weaknesses

Small sample size.

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