

Effects of complementary therapies on clinical outcomes in patients being treated with...

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Related Categories: Reiki/Therapeutic Touch

Full Title Effects of complementary therapies on clinical outcomes in patients being treated with radiation therapy for prostate cancer.

BACKGROUND.: This pilot randomized controlled trial (RCT) examined the clinical effects of 2 complementary (CAM) therapies, relaxation response therapy (RRT) and Reiki therapy, in men being treated with external beam radiotherapy (EBRx) for prostate cancer. **METHODS.:** Study participants were randomly assigned to weekly RRT, Reiki therapy twice weekly, or wait-list control. Well-validated instruments measured anxiety (STAI), depression (CES-D), and quality of life in cancer patients (FACT-G) at randomization and 3 subsequent time points. **RESULTS.:** Fifty-four men were randomized, and 16 of 18 (89%) of RRT and 15 of 18 (83%) of Reiki patients completed the intervention protocol. No statistically significant difference was found between the RRT, Reiki, and control groups on total scores for the STAI, CES-D, or FACT-G instruments at any time point. However, at the end of the intervention, significant improvement was found on the emotional well-being subscale of the FACT-G quality of life scale in the RRT group compared with the Reiki and control groups ($P = .01$). In participants who were classified as "anxious" at baseline, statistically significant improvement occurred in the RRT group ($P = .02$), and a positive trend was found in the Reiki group ($P = .10$). **CONCLUSIONS.:** This pilot study documented the feasibility of conducting a RCT of CAM therapies in men undergoing EBRx for prostate cancer. Relaxation response therapy improved emotional well being and eased anxiety in participants. Reiki therapy also had a positive effect in anxious patients. A larger study to verify and better define the benefits of these therapies in men with prostate cancer is warranted. Cancer 2010. (c) 2010 American Cancer Society.

Beard C, Stason WB, Wang Q, Manola J, Dean-Clower E, Dusek JA, Decristofaro S, Webster A, Rosenthal DS, Benson H. Cancer. 2010 Aug 27. Department of Radiation Oncology, Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women's Cancer Center, Boston, Massachusetts.

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