

Reiki Healing for Animals

By Kathleen Lester

Complementary healing therapies, such as Reiki, acupuncture, and massage for animals have become more mainstream in recent years as a complement to traditional veterinary medicine. We have come a long way from the days when these therapies were used only as a last resort, when all other options had been exhausted. Today, more and more people are seeking complementary healing therapies for their animal companions, as they are for themselves.

About Reiki

Reiki is Japanese healing system discovered in the 1920s and brought to the United States in 1938. Reiki (RAY kee) is passed on from teacher to student through an attunement process, and involves a deep spiritual practice by the practitioner that results in the practitioner's ability to facilitate healing for themselves and others.

Reiki is considered by the National Institute of Health's Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) as a biofield therapy. Illness, injury and trauma cause imbalances to the body, mind and spirit, and thus they appear in our animals as disease, pain, or stress. A Reiki practitioner is attuned to Reiki, and in turn is able to facilitate the flow of Reiki energy to the animal, working to bring into balance the energetic field or biofield that surrounds the animal's body. When the biofield is balanced, the animal's physical body can heal itself.

Is Reiki Right for Your Animal Companion?

Although scientific studies on Reiki are in the formative stages, research suggests that Reiki has demonstrated healing for general health and well-being, as well as several ailments, including: wounds, pain reduction, arthritis, relaxation, stress reduction, reduced anxiety, and others. There also is a significant amount of anecdotal information about the healing benefits of Reiki on spiritual, mental, emotional and physical levels.

- Reiki is safe and non-invasive, and therefore is a wonderful therapy for general health and well being to keep our animal companions balanced.
- Because of its demonstrated ability to reduce stress, Reiki is a great therapy for animals that are showing signs of anxiety, depression, or other forms of stress.
- Reiki also aids in pain management and can be used as a complement to traditional veterinary care for animals with injuries or diseases that are painful, such as cancer or arthritis.
- Reiki facilitates harmony and bonding between animals or between humans and animals.
- Reiki can also bring comfort to an animal transitioning through death.

What Should I Expect During a Reiki Session?

While Reiki for humans often involves hand positions, Reiki for animals does not require hands-on treatment. Hand positions are not important at all. A Reiki practitioner facilitates the healing energy to the animal simply by being in the same room and with the animal's permission; the practitioner may lightly touch the animal or place their hands directly above the animal.

During the session, the animal often will relax and may even go to sleep. Some animals move around during a session, absorbing the energy at their own pace. It is always the animal's choice to receive or not receive Reiki. At the end of a session, an animal will often offer a lick, a nudge, a rub or other sign thanking the practitioner for the session.

How Do I Find the Right Animal Reiki Practitioner?

Before selecting a Reiki practitioner, it is best to have the advice of your veterinarian as to your animal companion's condition. Once you have decided to hire a Reiki practitioner, it is best to find one that has completed at minimum their Level II certification, and can share with you their clinical experience. Avoid hiring a Reiki Practitioner who is not willing to be part of an integrative healing team. In Maryland, individuals can contact the Animal Reiki Alliance for a practitioner recommendation (www.animalreikialliance.com). 🐾

One final but important note: Reiki is NEVER a substitute for traditional veterinary medicine.

For more info contact:

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