Endoscopic Procedure with a Modified Reiki Intervention

Reference

Purpose of Study
The purpose of this pilot study was to investigate the feasibility of using a modified Reiki intervention prior to colonoscopy to reduce anxiety and improve the experience of patients undergoing this procedure.

Objective/goals/hypotheses
This pilot study examined the use of Reiki prior to colonoscopy to reduce anxiety and minimize intra-procedure medications compared with usual care. The authors hypothesized that with reduced anxiety symptoms, patients would be better able to tolerate colonoscopy, have fewer or no unpleasant emotional symptoms, and have a reduced need for additional sedating medications.

Methods
Study participants, (N=21) who were 29 years or older and were scheduled for their first colonoscopy, were assigned to the experimental group (pre-procedure 15 minute Reiki treatment intervention that was varied according to patient needs) or control group (usual colonoscopy care) group. The following data were collected pre and post Reiki or standard care (blood pressure, heart rate, respiration rate and self-report of pain and anxiety). Physiologic measures were taken every 5 minutes during colonoscopy and every 15 minutes (for 30-60 minutes) in the recovery area. Episodes of nausea, vomiting, and signs and symptoms of anxiety were noted and sedation dose recorded. After colonoscopy, repeat physiologic measures were obtained including self-reported pain and anxiety. A measure of satisfaction obtained from the Reiki group using a Likert-type scale.

Results
There were no significant differences between the groups for baseline physiologic measures but the Reiki group reported more symptoms of anxiety. Reiki treatment significantly reduced self-reported anxiety in this group. However, no significant between-group differences were observed post-procedure for either physiologic measures or self-reported measures of pain and anxiety. There was no difference between groups in the amount of sedation required. Reiki group participants had a 90% overall satisfaction with the procedure and would recommend the Reiki therapy treatment prior to colonoscopy.

Strengths
This study did demonstrate a self-reported decrease in anxiety from participants receiving Reiki with a high satisfaction rate and approval of pre-procedure Reiki treatment.

Weaknesses
The study population was small, participants and data collectors were non-blinded, there was no sham Reiki group, the Reiki treatment was not standardized between patients, the pain and anxiety score was not validated and the study was not truly randomized. Researchers allowed some participants to switch to the Reiki group on request.

Additional comments
As a pilot study, the results do give some limited positive encouragement to the use of Reiki to help reduce pre-procedure anxiety. However, the study design limits generalizability.