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## **ENERGY WORK AS AN ADJUNCT TO RADIATION THERAPY**

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In the last year I have had the privilege of meeting healers from all over the country. Some of them have shared tales of their most profound healing experiences with me. My friend David recently shared a story that shows how intent and belief can turn even a simple exercise into a powerful healing tool.

David is a Reiki master and Tai Chi instructor. For many years he has taught a Tai Chi class for cancer patients. In an effort to explain the concept of Chi (life force energy) to his students, David uses an exercise many of us learned in our first-degree Reiki classes. He has his patients move the palms of their hands together and apart until they can feel the energy between them, and then he has them form it into an energy ball or "Tai Chi ball" as he calls it.

David began, "One day after forming her energy ball, a woman who had just begun treatment for throat cancer asked, "Now what shall I do with it?"

"She caught me off guard," David told me. "In those days, I'd never thought about it being a healing tool; it was a parlor trick, a way of teaching people to feel their own energy, no more.

"Without a lot of thought, I glibly answered, "Why don't you rub it onto the places on your face and neck where you are receiving your radiation treatments. It may help to reduce the side effects from the radiation." She obviously believed I knew what I was talking about even though I didn't myself."

"How often should I do that?" she asked.

"Oh, at least 5 or 6 times a day."

David continued, "She took me at my word and started doing what I had suggested. After that she never needed to take any of her pain medicine and she never developed the burns and blisters they expected to come with her radiation treatments. The doctors couldn't understand what was happening. They were so concerned they began rechecking and recalibrating their equipment to be sure she was really receiving all the radiation she was supposed to get. The machines were all working just fine.

"Finally, she was due to receive her last treatment, a massive blast of radiation. The radiation oncologist told her, "This last treatment is twice as strong as any of your previous treatments. It's going to cause a severe burn, lots of blistering and a lot of pain, but it's necessary if we're going to lick your cancer."

David smiled, "Even the doctors' dire predictions couldn't crush the spirit of this determined 72-year-old. She had complete faith that the energy balls would protect her. So she doubled the use of the energy balls and went in for the treatment. The doctors couldn't believe the results. She developed

what looked like a slight sun burn after the last treatment, but she never developed the severe burn or blisters they had predicted.”

David continued, “Two years later, the same woman walked into my class one day and said, “Hi. I just wanted to say thank you because you changed my life.” She gave me a big hug and left.”

A week after hearing David's story, I was asked to go to the home of a man undergoing radiation therapy for head and neck cancer to give him a Reiki treatment. When I first saw Jim, his sunken cheeks and faded eyes, made him appear decades older than his fifty-odd years. His speech was slightly slurred and he kept dozing off in the big lounge chair that seemed to swallow up his bony frame. Unable to eat because of the side effects of the radiation treatments, he was so weak that when he rose to walk to the massage table, I feared he would collapse before reaching the other side of the room.

Jim seemed to enjoy his Reiki treatment, as did the bevy of family cats who insisted on joining him on the table and getting their share of the energy.

When we were through, his color was a bit brighter and he seemed to be more present. Before leaving the house, I told him David's story about the lady with throat cancer, and taught him how to make energy balls of his own.

I returned to his home ten days later and found Jim to be a changed man. I sat on the floor and gave Reiki to one of the cats while I watched Jim devour two full bowls of soup. His voice was strong as he reported that, for the last three days, he had felt well enough to drive himself the 120 miles round trip to receive his radiation treatments. His voice was still stronger as he argued with his wife about a plumbing job he had agreed to do the following day. She wanted him to stay home and rest. He said he felt just fine and didn't want to be inconvenienced by his cancer any longer.

I spoke with Jim's wife three weeks after the second Reiki session. Jim had continued to give himself “energy ball treatments” several times a day. His appetite remained good and he had gained five pounds. He was about to complete his radiation therapy and was feeling great.

Last week I heard from my friend David again. He was excited to report that he is now involved in the care of a third patient receiving radiation therapy for head and neck cancer. David is giving the man weekly Reiki treatments and, like our other two patients, has taught him to make energy balls and instructed him to apply them to the treatment sites several times a day. The patient seems to be tolerating the radiation treatments extremely well. He recently told David that his oncologist confirmed that he is in the 5% of radiation therapy patients with the least amount of side affects.

What started out as a “cool healing story” is proving to be a valuable tool in the care of patients receiving radiation therapy for head and neck cancer. We hope to see this complementary treatment offered to many others.

**Jeri Mills, MD** is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology. She is also a veterinarian, a Certified Reiki Master Teacher and author of the book *Tapestry of Healing: Where Reiki and Medicine Intertwine*. She has lectured extensively about the integration of Western medicine and Energy medicine. At present, she is devoting her time to writing and teaching. Her goal is to serve as a bridge between Eastern and Western medicine.

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