

# What Does An Animal Reiki Session Look Like?



Reiki (pronounced ray-kee) is an energetic healing method that is non-invasive, gentle, and relaxing. Reiki is a Japanese word that can be generally translated as "universal life energy" (you might already be familiar with the Chinese word Chi or Qi in this context). This healing energy does not originate with the practitioner, but is simply channeled through them.

Reiki can do no harm, and in fact the animal is allowed to choose how long to accept the healing energy offered. The deep relaxation that results allows the animal's body to begin to heal itself, whether physically or emotionally. Reiki is ideal for animals that become very stressed with more direct bodywork such as acupuncture. In fact, it is often done "hands-off" rather than "hands-on" because animals are much more sensitive to the energy.

Because Reiki is about offering healing energy rather than doing a physical manipulation like massage or acupuncture it may look as though nothing is happening. It may look as though the practitioner is simply meditating, and in fact it is a little bit like meditating because the practitioner is creating a quiet healing space that the animal can choose to enter. One might imagine it's as though the energy is radiating from the practitioner and the animal chooses how strong a signal to receive (like sitting around a campfire!).

If you've ever had Reiki yourself, you'll assume that the same hand positions are used on animals, but in fact skin-to-skin contact is not the norm when offering Reiki to animals. Many animals prefer to have it done "hands-off," and may even move further away from the practitioner when first being offered Reiki because they find this new energy flowing near them to be strange at first.

It's essential that the animal be allowed this freedom to accept Reiki as it desires. Animals may not even look like they're "getting it." They may relax for five minutes then get up and stretch or walk around the room, changing position in the room and settling down again. They may yawn, lick, or just settle down for a nap. Often animals will take breaks, and this should not be seen as a failure but as a normal part of the process. Sometimes, over the course of a session and a series of sessions the animals may settle in for longer periods of time and get progressively closer to the practitioner, even offering specific part of their body for attention, but not doing so does not mean that they are not getting the full benefit of the treatment.

Reiki is often presented as flowing from the hands of the practitioner, but it really flows from the whole person. While some animals push their bodies into the hands of the practitioner others prefer to simply get the "spill-over" from a practitioner's personal space. A good Reiki practitioner will just let the animal come into their space at whatever pace the animal is comfortable with.

You are welcome to be present with your animal during a session, but it's important that you also set your own inner intention for healing your animal. You might meditate or lay down, but however you choose to be a part of the healing process it's important to relax and let the Reiki be offered without worry or stress, even if the animal is having a health crisis. You may be inclined to interact with your pet, but we don't want to distract them from their own healing process, so it's best to just let them be. Quiet background music may help everyone relax and focus. Your other pets may wish to present as well to share in the Reiki energy, and that is fine.