

# Healing Touch – The changing paradigm of Health Care

Healing Touch is a term that is being heard more and more frequently as people find out about the beneficial aspects of this effective, alternative healing modality. Most frequently, in speaking with people, I hear “Healing Touch, I’ve heard of that.” It is usually followed by a request for an explanation.

Healing Touch is a complementary (or integrative) energy therapy that can be used in conjunction with traditional therapies. Healing Touch utilizes off the body and/or light touch to clear, balance and energize the human energy system in an effort to promote healing for the mind, body and spirit. The gentle touch by the practitioner encourages the body’s own self-healing abilities, by balancing the energy field, bringing a deep sense of relaxation.

Energy therapies are based on the premise that the body is a complex energy field and that a trained practitioner can balance and open blockages in the energy field so that the body can heal itself. The National Institute of Health calls it a “biofield therapy”. Blockages can be caused by a physical or emotional trauma that has been left unresolved, which can contribute to illness. Stress and anxiety get in the way of optimizing the body’s potential for healing.

“In a few decades scientists have gone from a conviction that there is no such thing as energy fields in and around the human body to an absolute certainty that they exist.” *Energy Medicine, The Scientific Basis* by James Oschman PhD, 2000

Hospitals, nursing and medical schools, and allied health professions throughout the world are increasingly embracing Integrative Medicine therapies as consumer demand multiplies and as research shows beginning support for its use. Healing Touch skills are becoming increasingly validated in health care systems around the world. It is actively being used in over 40 hospitals and other healthcare facilities across the country. Hospitals that support the practice of Healing Touch as part of their integrative health care system have found that it facilitates the return of compassion to the forefront of patient care.

The popular demand for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) therapies was demonstrated by the 1997 National Household Survey which showed the total visits to CAM providers (629 million) exceeded the total number of visits to all primary care physicians (386 million) in the United States in 1997. The 2002 Veteran Affairs (VA) CAM report showed that 84% of facilities provide some form of CAM. Today, Healing Touch is frequently considered by hospitals that are pursuing the introduction of CAM therapies.

As Healing Touch and other energy therapies grow in popularity, research is following with studies that outline the benefits. Currently, studies have shown that Healing Touch is beneficial for relief from pain, anxiety and stress, provides support during chemotherapy, radiation and surgery, improves mood, enhances the immune system and reduces effects from trauma and

chronic pain. Hospice givers are using HT to ease the dying process as well as provide support family and friends. Many people experience a deeper sense of spiritual connection.

Common, everyday impacts to one's health may also benefit from Healing Touch. A headache, stuffy nose, insomnia, sore throat or twisted ankle may find relief through this energy modality.

Healing Touch is a complementary modality and is meant to be used as a complement to, not a replacement of standard medical care. Practitioners are careful to recommend clients seek the proper medical attention for specific health problems. The goal of Healing Touch is to restore harmony and balance in the human energy system by creating an optimal environment for the body's innate tendency to allow for healing to occur.

A Healing Touch session can be given anywhere, from a chair in a client's home to the bed in a hospital room. Typically during a session, the person remains fully clothed and is usually lying on a treatment table or in bed. Soft music may be played and the lighting may be subdued for relaxation. An average session may last anywhere from 15 to 60 minutes, based on the client's needs and the technique being used.

Healing Touch has an effect on the practitioner as well as the recipient. Many practitioners have expressed how Healing Touch has affected their lives in a positive way; that by giving they also find themselves on the receiving end mentally, physically and spiritually.

In 1989, Janet Mentgen, BSN, RN, HNC, CHTP/I, the founder, developed a curriculum based on a nursing format, to teach Healing Touch in a series of classes. Since that time more than 100,000 students have participated in the program and there are over 1900 Certified Healing Touch Practitioners. Janet believed that anyone could learn how to facilitate healing in others.

Classes in Healing Touch can be found almost anywhere in the country. They are open to anyone who is interested in exploring this healing modality.

The Healing Touch Program website [www.HealingTouchProgram.com](http://www.HealingTouchProgram.com) offers information and support through an extensive listing of classes, a Practitioner Directory and a Healthcare Directory. Energy Magazine, a free monthly subscription, shares information about energy medicine and Healing Touch through stories of personal experience, articles, research and more. Questions can be directed to [info@HealingTouchProgram.com](mailto:info@HealingTouchProgram.com). The Healing Touch Program office can be reached at 303-989-0581.