

## THE BEST MEDICINE

### Refuah Sheleimah (Total Recovery)

For many people, the words “*refuah sheleimah*” are the knee-jerk response to anyone suffering ill health, whether the patient is bothered by a head cold or lying helplessly in a hospital bed. Mouthing this blessing often seems like an ineffectual effort – a benign expression of sympathy for a situation one can do very little to take care of. But that is a great underestimation of the power of these words, for, as one sage writes, they really can be a powerful prayer to Hashem to restore the patient’s full health and strength.

There are reminders all around us that health cannot be taken for granted. One sage advised using these reminders as prompts to utter one’s own, brief prayers for the benefit of those whose health is compromised. *“Whenever Moshe heard the sound of the siren or saw an ambulance rushing on its way, he was touched. He could relate to the pain and anxiety of the person to whom it was responding, and he would pray for his recovery.”*

“Love your fellow man as you love yourself,” for surely, each person hopes that, were he in the patient’s place (Heaven forbid), prayers for his recovery would draw other people to join in and pray with him.

### POINTS TO PONDER

**The blessing “*refuah sheleimah*,” said with sincerity and answered with “Amen,” has real curative power.**

**One should use any occasion in which he is reminded of man’s vulnerability to illness to thank Hashem for his own health and say a short prayer for those who are afflicted.**

**Deuteronomy 32:39 "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand. (ESV)**