

What is Tai Chi?

Tai chi is a mind-body practice. It comes from China and is thousands of years old. It involves gentle movement, breathing techniques, and mental focus. It is usually done while standing. It also can be done while sitting. It is not competitive and moves slowly. Each body movement flows into the next body movement. Tai chi was originally developed as a self-defense technique.



WHAT IS TAI CHI GOOD FOR?

Tai chi can help with balance in older people or people with Parkinson's disease. It is also helpful for pain. This includes pain related to fibromyalgia, knee osteoarthritis, and back pain. It can help improve your mood, reduce stress, and decrease anxiety. It may help you sleep better and help you feel better overall.

IS TAI CHI DIFFERENT FROM YOGA?

Yes. Both tai chi and yoga include physical movement and mental focus. Yoga, however, comes from India and involves different types of movement. Yoga also often includes meditation.

HOW IS TAI CHI DIFFERENT FROM QI GONG?

The answer is complicated! Qi gong is also an ancient Chinese mind-body practice. They both use slow, flowing movements. There are many styles of tai chi and qi gong. Tai chi movements can be more complex than qi gong. Tai chi movements are more closely related to martial arts movements. They also work with energy flow in different ways.

WHO CAN DO TAI CHI?

Most people can do tai chi. Tai chi is a low impact exercise. It may be especially good for older people. You can do it indoors or outdoors. Women who are pregnant, people with very bad joint problems, back pain, fractures, osteoarthritis, or a hernia should talk to their health care professionals before trying tai chi.

HOW CAN I GET STARTED?

It may be best to start with a teacher. A teacher can help you learn good form and modify the movements if you need to. Tai chi is often offered in group classes. You also could try to find a class online.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 1) <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/tai-chi/art-20045184>
- 2) <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/taichi>



For more information, scan the QR code below, or visit nciph.org/tai_chi



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