

Tai Chi and arthritis

Tai Chi has been helping people with arthritis in China for centuries. Now there is scientific evidence to prove its effectiveness. Tai Chi contains many styles and there are significant differences between each one. Most styles - including Sun, Yang, Hao and Wu - are suitable for people with arthritis. It is important to ensure that your instructor is familiar with arthritis and knows how to give you special attention.

Tai Chi originated in ancient China

Tai Chi has been practiced in China for centuries. Tai Chi:

- Is suitable for almost anyone
- Integrates the body and mind
- Uses gentle and circular movements
- Is easy to learn for arthritis relief
- Is enjoyable.

Tai Chi can help control symptoms of arthritis

There are many different types of arthritis. Although it is not curable, there is much that can be done to control the condition. This is important, as it allows arthritis sufferers to function normally and enjoy their chosen lifestyle.

Exercise is an essential part of the many different approaches to controlling arthritis. It works by improving flexibility, muscle strengthening and fitness. Scientific studies show that Tai Chi is able to improve these three aspects of body functioning.

Other health benefits

Tai Chi is easy and inexpensive to learn. It can also help to:

- Promote correct body posture
- Integrate body, mind and spirit
- Improve Qi (a life energy which governs all functions of the body).

You need a good instructor

There are many forms of Tai Chi. It is best to find an instructor who understands and takes special care of people with arthritis. Your local branch of the Arthritis Foundation will help you to find suitable instructors. You should talk to your doctor or health professional so that they can advise you as to whether Tai Chi is suitable for you. Keep your doctor informed; it will help them to care for you better.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Rheumatologist
- Physiotherapist
- Arthritis Victoria toll free Tel: 1800 011 041 or Tel: (03) 8531 8000

Things to remember

- Exercises can help you to manage arthritis symptoms.
- The Arthritis Foundation can provide referral and assistance.
- Most forms of Tai Chi will help arthritis sufferers.

This page has been produced in consultation with, and approved by:

Tai Chi Association of Australia

Content on this website is provided for education and information purposes only. Information about a therapy, service, product or treatment does not imply endorsement and is not intended to replace advice from your doctor or other registered health professional. Content has been prepared for Victorian residents and wider Australian audiences, and was accurate at the time of publication. Readers should note that, over time, currency and completeness of the information may change. All users are urged to always seek advice from a registered health care professional for diagnosis and answers to their medical questions.

For the latest updates and more information, visit www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Copyright © 1999/2011 State of Victoria. Reproduced from the Better Health Channel (www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) at no cost with permission of the Victorian Minister for Health. Unauthorised reproduction and other uses comprised in the copyright are prohibited without permission.