

OPEN THE DOOR TO TAI CHI

WAKE UP WITH TAI CHI

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FAI
EDUCATION

OPEN THE DOOR TO TAI CHI

WELCOME!

Welcome to Open the Door to Tai Chi! We are excited to have you join us and are glad you are interested in starting your day with Tai Chi.

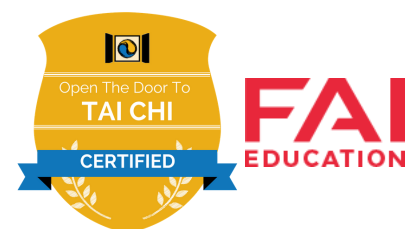
This series includes 3 separate videos. The first one is an introduction which gives you some important information on how to use these videos. We have also supplemented the videos with a glossary of terms, a list of the movements in order of the form, and some research that shows how Tai Chi improves helps your body function at its best.

The second video teaches you the individual movements in this form and outlines the critical underlying principles. Take your time going through this video. Practice each movement separately by watching the demonstration and then stopping the video to do your own practice. This isn't a race! In fact, Tai Chi can be something you do for the rest of your life.

The third video is where we put it all together and you learn the Wake Up with Tai Chi form. These movements are based in the Yang style of Tai Chi and include some Qigong movements as well. They are designed to encourage your body to gently get moving in the morning and to introduce some mental focus.

I hope you enjoy these videos and look forward to hearing how they have helped you be the best you can be each day. I also hope you will be encouraged to continue your study of Tai Chi and seek out a local instructor in your community.

In Health,
Dianne Bailey
CSCS, FAS, CTCI



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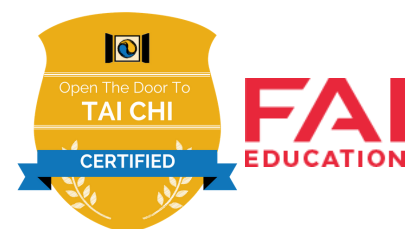
BEFORE YOU START

Open the Door to Tai Chi strongly recommends that you consult with your physician before beginning any exercise program.

You should be in good physical condition and be able to participate in the exercise.

Open the Door to Tai Chi is not a licensed medical care provider and represents that it has no expertise in diagnosing, examining, or treating medical conditions of any kind, or in determining the effect of any specific exercise on a medical condition.

You should understand that when participating in any exercise or exercise program, there is the possibility of physical injury. If you engage in this exercise or exercise program, you agree that you do so at your own risk, are voluntarily participating in these activities, assume all risk of injury to yourself, and agree to release and discharge Open the Door to Tai Chi from any and all claims or causes of action, known or unknown, arising out of Open the Door to Tai Chi negligence.



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OPEN THE DOOR TO TAI CHI

WAKE UP WITH TAI CHI
FORM (PAGE 1 OF 2)

Good morning! Are your joints stiff when you first get out of bed? Is your brain just a little bit foggy before you sit down for that first cup of coffee? This Tai Chi/Qigong routine will help open up your body and your mind so you are ready to tackle the day.

While these movements are from the Yang style of Tai Chi and Qigong and are specifically selected to help you gently get your body moving in the morning based on the underlying principles, this form is not a traditional Tai Chi form. We also make no claims that any of these movements will heal specific ailments. We hope that it inspires you to learn more and seek out an instructor in your area. You can move on to learn one or more of the traditional forms of Tai Chi.

Principles:

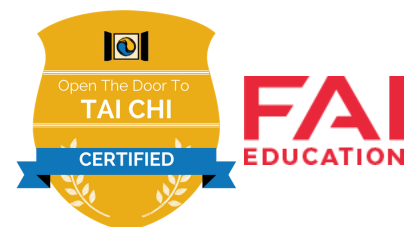
Open joints/Relaxation

Breathing

Columns

Energy flow

Mental focus



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OPEN THE DOOR TO TAI CHI

WAKE UP WITH TAI CHI
FORM (PAGE 2 OF 2)

FORM OUTLINE:

Preparation

Pushing Mountains

Raise Hands

Raise Hands and turn

Parting the Clouds

Lifting Hands/Play the Guitar

(advanced version w/lift knees and kick)

Pushing Chi

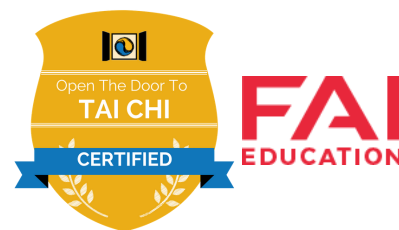
Wave Hands – no step

Single Whip L

Wave Hands – no step

Single Whip R

Heaven and Earth



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OPEN THE DOOR TO TAI CHI

THE LANGUAGE OF TAI CHI
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Any time you begin a new pursuit, you must learn a new language. Tai Chi is no different. Here are some of the terms with which you must become familiar in order to really understand your practice of Tai Chi.

Dan Tian

The dan tian is the center of your energy in your body. It is roughly 2 inches in from your belly button and 2 inches down. This location describes the lower dan tian. From an exercise physiology perspective, it is also the center of your balance. In Tai Chi, you must learn to move from your dan tian. In order to keep your columns intact and maintain balance including the concept of substantial and insubstantial, you must learn to move from the dan tian. Your shoulders must remain above your hips in a relaxed posture. If you allow your shoulders to lead a movement, for example, you end up pushing your shoulders in front of your hips.

Columns

This principle is really all about correct posture. Just think about your mom putting a book on your head and making you walk across the room without letting the book fall to the floor. There are three columns that are incorporated in the practice of Tai Chi. One runs from the top of the head through the center of the body and the other two run from the shoulders through the hips. It is not a military “ram-rod” straight position . . . it is more of the idea that you are suspended from the ceiling and everything falls naturally into alignment.



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Columns (cont.)

As you learn to keep your shoulders above your hips and to move from the dan tian while keeping your focus on the horizon, you should feel a natural relaxation occurring throughout your body. A perfect posture like this allows the right muscles to support your body against the pull of gravity. Again, imagine a string attached to your head and that string allows you to be suspended from the ceiling (not like a noose!). Your body naturally falls into the perfect alignment and everything is relaxed.

Substantial and Insubstantial

Tai Chi is a series of one legged events. At any one time, one leg is substantial and the other is insubstantial. You should actually be able to lift the insubstantial leg off of the ground and keep your balance.

Think about real life. Walking is essentially a one-legged event. Research shows that approximately 80% of the time, you only have one foot on the ground at a time when you are walking. In this same way, we can look at running as controlled falling. As you propel yourself forward, your foot comes forward and "breaks your fall." In Tai Chi, we purposefully eliminate this controlled falling by focusing on balance and the concept of insubstantial and substantial in our one-legged events. As we step forward, we carefully place our leg down when we choose to put it down . . . and then we shift our weight forward from the dan tian, keeping our columns intact.



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Substantial and Insubstantial(cont.)

Imagine an airplane landing very smoothly. It doesn't just hover and land straight down. It glides forward and touches down just at the right moment.

Understanding substantial and insubstantial should feel as if water is flowing from one side to the next. One side empties before it moves. The weight bearing side is substantial and the non-weight bearing side, or the empty side, is insubstantial.

Mastering this concept is key to balance.

Rooted and Grounded

The concept of being rooted in Tai Chi means that you are stable and in firm contact with the ground. It starts with relaxing your body. You want to be able to stand in any of the postures and feel all your muscles relax. You want to think of the concept of settling into each posture and creating a balance that will not allow your opponent to gain an advantage. This balance includes sinking into your stances as deeply as you personally can achieve.

As you work on being rooted, don't confuse this concept with having your feet glued to the ground. You must still have fluid movement throughout the form.

Weight shift and the concept of substantial and insubstantial play a big part in keeping yourself rooted. Try to imagine your whole body as a tree whose roots go both deep and wide. The substantial leg will be firmly in contact with the ground. As you move through the form, however, you must shift your weight and change from substantial to insubstantial easily and fluidly.



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Rooted and Grounded (cont.)

As you attempt to get deeper into each posture, make sure that your toes stay in alignment with your knees. Focus on allowing your feet to adjust and not letting them be "glued" to the ground in one position. Understanding the intention and purpose of each movement helps to understand how to become rooted and pulls together the concepts of substantial and insubstantial, balance, sinking and centering. When you consider the martial arts application of the movement, you can create the posture needed to be in the best position to defend an attack. If you are not properly rooted, your opponent will easily gain the advantage by pulling or pushing you off balance.

Relaxation/connectedness

In Tai Chi, you should try to connect with and learn to control the energy in your body. This is part of the "healing" aspect and meditative component of Tai Chi. You must remain relaxed throughout and maintain your wrists in "delicate lady's wrists" to help the flow. As you move, think about your legs being light and your body flowing in a relaxing state. Sometimes it helps to envision light flowing through your body. The energy flow in Tai Chi keeps the movement going. Think of the Tai Chi symbol, the yin/yang circle. It flows from one to the next and back again, and each side cannot exist without the other.



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Relaxation/connectedness (cont.)

Every move in the form is connected to the next movement. It is not a telegram where you start a sentence and then stop. You don't stop between each posture. Use your rotation and weight shift to connect each move. Remember that "hold the ball" is a transition . . . not a separate posture. Think about gathering the energy into the "ball" and then releasing it throughout the posture.

In order for your chi, or energy, to flow, you must keep your wrists loose and your hands soft and slightly cupped. This is called "delicate lady's wrists." If you make your hands and wrists tight, you will block the flow of energy. Imagine a violinist and her hand on the bow. Her wrist is fluid and yet controls the bow. You must keep your hands and wrists fluid to control your chi.

Keeping your body relaxed and focusing on the energy flow allows you to start to benefit from the meditative effects of Tai Chi. As you relax your muscles and keep the movement flowing from one posture to the next, you can start to focus on "leading" the chi through the body. Imagine a light flowing throughout your body. That light is both powerful and healing at the same time. Allow the light to penetrate all parts of your body. Feel the energy and the relaxation that results. Keep the flow going by connecting all movements together and not stopping. As you learn to regulate the body in this way, you will begin to learn to regulate the mind and the chi.



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Breathing

Breathing is level two in the progression of Tai Chi. You must first learn to regulate the body. Then you can move on to regulate the breathing. Then you can learn to regulate the mind and then the chi and then the spirit. When first thinking about the breathing, you should consider the martial arts application and breathe on the exertion of the force. Next, learning to control your breath much like a singer has to control their breathing is essential. It is not a quick inhalation and quick exhalation. It should be continuous and uniform, slow and calm. As you train, the control of your breathing will also guide your energy flow and relaxation and meditation. It also improves your lung function as you allow the lungs to expand and contract fully. Learning to keep your breathing slow and calm will also help reduce anxiety and contributes to keeping your blood pressure normal.

Yin/Yang

Yin is on one edge of energy that is expressed as deficient. The opposite is Yang energy which is expressed as too sufficient. These forces don't exist without the other and they must balance each other out. Yin is often affiliated with soft, feminine and weak whereas Yang is affiliated with hard, masculine and strong. These concepts, however, are not to be taken as absolutes, but rather as relative ideas. Both Yin and Yang are present in each individual, situation, and even thoughts. Think of it this way: If a "normal" state of mind is the reference point, then your emotions are too Yin if you are depressed and they are too Yang if you are wildly ecstatic.



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Rotation

Rotation in the ancient manuscripts is described as “massaging the internal organs.” Rotation is an important skill in everyday life. We are constantly turning to pick something up off the floor or put something away on a high shelf. Improper rotation or rotation without a strong core is another one of those areas that results in injury and time away from the things we want to be doing. We need to train the body to rotate on the central axis of the spine in order to keep things in alignment. If you move side to side from your torso, you will feel the gentle “massaging” effect that the ancient manuscripts were talking about. You must learn to move from side to side, but still maintain your columns. This is the ultimate core workout!! As you rotate from side to side, your eyes should follow your movement. Since Tai Chi is a martial art, consider that rotation allows the entire body to be involved in a movement and not just the limbs. This provides tremendous power. Take a look at a baseball player's swing, for example. He doesn't just stand upright and swing his arms from the shoulders. He uses his entire body by stepping and rotating with each swing. Think about the rotation as a coiling and uncoiling, or a gathering and releasing of power.



OPEN THE DOOR TO TAI CHI

STUDIES ON TAI CHI

Here are a few research studies that show how Tai Chi improves your health and cognition.

Jahnke, Roger, Linda Larkey, Carol Rogers, Jennifer Etnier, and Fang Lin. "A Comprehensive Review of Health Benefits of Qigong and Tai Chi." American Journal of Health Promotion : AJHP. U.S. National Library of Medicine, 1 July 2011. Web. 30 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3085832/>>. This review has identified numerous outcomes with varying levels of evidence for the efficacy for Qigong and Tai Chi, including bone health, cardiopulmonary fitness and related biomarkers, physical function, falls prevention and balance, general quality of life and patient reported outcomes, immunity, and psychological factors such as anxiety, depression and self-efficacy.

Lan, C., J. S. Lai, and S. Y. Chen. "Result Filters." Tai Chi Chuan: An Ancient Wisdom on Exercise and Health Promotion. Sports Medicine, 4 Apr. 2002. Web. 20 Mar. 2016. <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11929351>>. Tai Chi Chuan (TCC) is a Chinese conditioning exercise and is well known for its slow and graceful movements. Recent investigations have found that TCC is beneficial to cardiorespiratory function, strength, balance, flexibility, microcirculation and psychological profile. The long-term practice of TCC can attenuate the age decline in physical function, and consequently it is a suitable exercise for the middle-aged and elderly individuals. TCC can be prescribed as an alternative exercise programme for selected patients with cardiovascular, orthopaedic, or neurological diseases, and can reduce the risk of falls in elderly individuals. The exercise intensity of TCC depends on training style, posture and duration. Participants can choose to perform a complete set of TCC or selected movements according to their needs. In conclusion, TCC has potential benefits in health promotion, and is appropriate for implementation in the community.

"Heart Health | Manage Stress - Consumer Reports." Heart Health | Manage Stress - Consumer Reports. Consumer Reports, Mar. 2013. Web. 30 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/2013/02/manage-stress/index.htm>>. Consumer reports states that Tai Chi is an effective practice for stress management



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STUDIES ON TAI CHI

"Tai Chi and Qi Gong Show Some Beneficial Health Effects." NCCIH. National Institute of Health/National Center of Complimentary Medicine and Integrated Health, 1 July 2010. Web. 30 Aug. 2015. <<https://nccih.nih.gov/research/results/spotlight/071910.htm>>. The reviewers from Arizona State University and the University of North Carolina concluded that the evidence is sufficient to suggest that tai chi and qi gong are a viable alternative to conventional forms of exercise. They also noted that because of the similarities in philosophy and critical elements between tai chi and qi gong, the outcomes can be analyzed across both types of studies.

"Tai Chi and Cardiac Rehabilitation-Mayo Clinic." YouTube. Mayo Clinic, 23 July 2010. Web. 30 Aug. 2015. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsbhtTwe5Kc>>. For hundreds of years people have practiced the Chinese martial art of Tai Chi for its many health benefits. Researchers who study Tai Chi say it can help reduce blood pressure, decrease anxiety, improve flexibility and much more. For these reasons, some doctors at Mayo Clinic have embraced Tai Chi and are teaching it to their patients.

Yeh, GY. "The Effect of Tai Chi Exercise on Blood Pressure: A Systematic Review." *Prev Cardiol* 11.Spring (2008): 82-89. The Effect of Tai Chi Exercise on Blood Pressure: A Systematic Review. U.S. National Library of Medicine. Web. 20 Mar. 2016. <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0026138/>>. The review concluded that tai chi exercise may reduce blood pressure and serve as a practical adjunct to conventional hypertension management, but that further studies were needed. These conclusions were suitably cautious in reflecting the limited evidence available and appear likely to be reliable.

Wang, F., EK Lee, T. Wu, H. Benson, GY Fricchione, W. Wang, and AS Yeung. "The Effects of Tai Chi on Depression, Anxiety, and Psychological Well-being: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis." *In J Behav Med* 21.Aug (2014): 605-17. National Center for Biotechnology Information. *Int J Behav Med*. Web. 20 Mar. 2016. <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24078491/>>. The studies in this review demonstrated that tai chi interventions have beneficial effects for various populations on a range of psychological well-being measures, including depression, anxiety, general stress management, and exercise self-efficacy. Meta-analysis was performed on three RCTs that used depression as an outcome measure (ES=-5.97; 95% CI -7.06 to -4.87), with I2=0%.

Jin, P. "Result Changes in Heart Rate, Noradrenaline, Cortisol and Mood during Tai Chi." *J Psychosom Res* 33.2 (1989): 197-206. National Center for Biotechnology Information. U.S. National Library of Medicine, 1989. Web. 20 Mar. 2016. <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2724196>>. Changes



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STUDIES ON TAI CHI

Jin, P. "Efficacy of Tai Chi, Brisk Walking, Meditation, and Reading in Reducing Mental and Emotional Stress." National Center for Biotechnology Information. Journal of Psychosomatic Research, May 1992. Web. 20 Mar. 2016.
<<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/1593511>>. Tai Chi, a moving meditation, is examined for its efficacy in post-stressor recovery. Forty-eight male and 48 female Tai Chi practitioners were randomly assigned to four treatment groups: Tai Chi, brisk walking, meditation and neutral reading. Mental arithmetic and other difficult tests were chosen as mental challenges, and a stressful film was used to produce emotional disturbance. Tai Chi and the other treatments were applied after these stressors. After all treatments, the salivary cortisol level dropped significantly, and the mood states were also improved. In general the stress-reduction effect of Tai Chi characterized moderate physical exercise. Heart rate, blood pressure, and urinary catecholamine changes for Tai Chi were found to be similar to those for walking at a speed of 6 km/hr. Although Tai Chi appeared to be superior to neutral reading in the reduction of state anxiety and the enhancement of vigour, this effect could be partially accounted for by the subjects' high expectations about gains from Tai Chi. Approaches controlling for expectancy level are recommended for further assessment.

Yau, MK. "Result Filters." Tai Chi Exercise and the Improvement of Health and Well-being in Older Adults. 52 (2008): 155-65. National Center for Biotechnology Information. Med Sports Sci, 2008. Web. 20 Mar. 2016.
<<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18487895>>. Activity participation has a positive impact on both quantity and quality of life (QOL). Regular participations in physical, social, and cultural activities are associated with successful aging. There is considerable evidence that Tai Chi has positive health benefits: physical, psychosocial and therapeutic. Furthermore, Tai Chi does not only consist of a physical component, but also sociocultural, meditative components that are believed to contribute to overall well-being. This chapter describes the benefits of Tai Chi exercise for the older adults, particularly in terms of the psychosocial aspect. The perceived meanings, associated values and well-being, as well as the impact on QOL, of Tai Chi practice among the older adults in Hong Kong are also discussed. Tai Chi exercise is chosen by the elderly participants for its gentle and soft movements. Besides the physical aspect, the benefits they describe include lifestyle issues, as well as psychological and social benefits. Evidence points out that the improvements in physical and mental health through the practice of Tai Chi among the older adults are related to their perceived level of QOL. Findings from numerous studies support the belief that the practice of Tai Chi has multiple benefits to practitioners that are not only physical in nature. It is recommended as a strategy to promote successful aging.



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STUDIES ON TAI CHI

Kuramoto, AM. "Therapeutic Benefits of Tai Chi Exercise: Research Review." Therapeutic Benefits of Tai Chi Exercise: Research Review (2006): 42-46. https://www.wisconsinmedicalsociety.org/_WMS/publications/wmj/pdf/105/7/42.pdf. Oct. 2006. Web. 20 Mar. 2016. <https://www.wisconsinmedicalsociety.org/_WMS/publications/wmj/pdf/105/7/42.pdf>. The majority of studies on Tai Chi conducted between 1996 and 2004 had focused on health and well being of Tai Chi exercise for senior adults. The results show that Tai Chi may lead to improved balance, reduced fear of falling, increased strength, increased functional mobility, greater flexibility, and increased psychological well-being, sleep enhancement for sleep disturbed elderly individuals, and increased cardio functioning. Wang, Collet, and Lau did a systematic review on Tai Chi research and found some limitations or biases existing in some of the studies, and it was difficult to draw firm conclusions about the benefits reported. Therefore, more well-designed studies are needed in the future. There need to be studies on the effects on younger and middle-aged people. More longitudinal studies are needed, since time is an important factor of physical and psychological interventions. Studies on the effects of Tai Chi on the immune system and bone loss reduction are still very exploratory and will be especially useful for arthritis patients and others with immune disorders. Future studies should investigate outcomes associated with Tai Chi training as a function of different instructional techniques, different Tai Chi styles, different diagnostic groups, and different age groups. It is not yet clear which of the components in Tai Chi makes the exercise form especially effective for seniors. Tai Chi exercise is a relatively "low tech" approach to preventing disability and maintaining physical performance in older adults. The positive effects of Tai Chi may be due solely to its relaxing, meditative aspects. The current data suggest that Tai Chi can influence older individuals' functioning and well being and provide some appreciation for why this exercise form has been practiced by older Chinese for more than 3 centuries.

Zheng, GY, and Et. Al. "Tai Chi and the Protection of Cognitive Ability." ResearchGate. Am J Prov Med, July 2015. Web. 20 Mar. 2016. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/278742802_Tai_Chi_and_the_Protection_of_Cognitive_Ability>. Compared with usual physical activities, Tai Chi shows potential protective effects on healthy adults' cognitive ability. Large RCTs with more rigorous designs are needed to fully evaluate and confirm its potential benefits.

Wayne, PM, and Et.al. "Effect of Tai Chi on Cognitive Performance in Older Adults: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis." Journal of the American Geriatric Society 62.1 (2014): 25-39. Journal of the American Geriatric Society. Jan. 2014. Web. 20 Mar. 2016. <<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jgs.12611/abstract>>. Tai Chi shows potential to enhance cognitive function in older adults, particularly in the realm of executive functioning and in individuals without significant impairment. Larger and methodologically sound trials with longer follow-up periods are needed before more-definitive conclusions can be drawn.



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STUDIES ON TAI CHI

JJin, P. "Result Changes in Heart Rate, Noradrenaline, Cortisol and Mood during Tai Chi." J Psychosom Res 33.2 (1989): 197-206.
National Center for Biotechnology Information. U.S. National Library of Medicine, 1989. Web. 20 Mar. 2016.
<<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2724196>>. Changes in psychological and physiological functioning following participation in Tai Chi were assessed for 33 beginners and 33 practitioners. The variables in the three-way factorial design were experience (beginners vs practitioners), time (morning vs afternoon vs evening), and phase (before Tai Chi vs during Tai Chi vs after Tai Chi). Phase was a repeated measures variable. Relative to measures taken beforehand, practice of Tai Chi raised heart rate, Increased noradrenaline excretion in urine, and decreased salivary cortisol concentration. Relative to baseline levels, subjects reported less tension, depression, anger, fatigue, confusion and state-anxiety, they felt more vigorous, and in general they had less total mood disturbance. The data suggest that Tai Chi results in gains that are comparable to those found with moderate exercise. There is need for research concerned with whether participation in Tai Chi has effects over and above those associated with physical exercise.

Li, F., Fisher, K. J., Harmer, P., Irbe, D., Tearse, R. G. and Weimer, C. (2004), Tai Chi and Self-Rated Quality of Sleep and Daytime Sleepiness in Older Adults: A Randomized Controlled Trial. Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, 52:892-900.
doi:10.1111/j.1532-5415.2004.52255.xThis project was funded by National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Mental Health, Grant MH62327. Older adults with moderate sleep complaints can improve self-rated sleep quality through a 6-month, low- to moderate-intensity tai chi program. Tai chi appears to be effective as a nonpharmacological approach to sleep enhancement for sleep-disturbed elderly individuals.