

Tai Chi for Health

by Regina Ann

My Tai Chi practice began in 2005 after reading articles from sources such as Mayo Clinic and Harvard about the health benefits of Tai Chi for various diseases including heart conditions. Having just been placed on medication for heart arrhythmia at the time, I was looking for something to relieve stress, balance my energy, and strengthen the rhythm of my heart. Currently, my heart is stronger than it ever has been, I am off all medications, no longer suffer from heart arrhythmia and Tai Chi is still a part of my day.

Tai Chi is a graceful series of movements originally developed in China that help balance the chi or energy of the body. Commonly described as “meditation in motion” because of the serenity resulting from the gentle movements and coordinated breathing allowing the connection of body and mind. Focused attention on movement and breath frees the mind from the thoughts and concerns of life resulting in reduced stress and a more calm state of being.

According to Mayo Clinic, recent studies of Tai Chi have revealed evidence suggesting Tai Chi may offer benefits including:

- ~ stress reduction
- ~ improved sleep quality
- ~ lower blood pressure
- ~ improved cardiovascular fitness
- ~ chronic pain relief
- ~ reduced anxiety and depression
- ~ increased energy
- ~ improved balance
- ~ improved muscle strength
- ~ increased endurance

Tai Chi instructors are becoming easier to find locally and there are excellent DVD's for practice at home. My personal favorites are offered by Gaiam. I have benefited from both instruction and DVD practice. Through the years I have even become comfortable practicing with nothing but the movements my body has memorized through the years. As you grow in your practice of Tai Chi you can draw on the stress reduction benefits throughout your day whether stuck in traffic or in a meeting.

Wishing you Whole Wellness ~~*

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