

## FAST FACTS: Tai chi

Tai chi (pronounced TIE-CHEE), an ancient Chinese tradition, was originally developed for self-defense but has developed into a graceful form of exercise and can reduce pain through strengthening and improving flexibility and balance. Tai chi involves a series of slow, gentle, smooth movements.

### ✓ Core Components of Tai chi

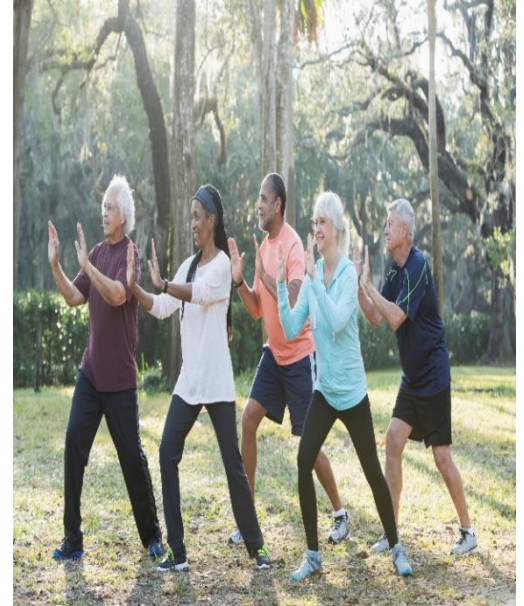
- Noncompetitive, self-paced system of gentle physical exercise and stretching.
- Low impact, puts minimal stress on muscles or joints, making it very suitable for older adults.
- During movement the participant should breathe deeply and naturally, focusing on movements.
- Requires no special equipment and can be done indoors or outdoors.
- As with all therapies, consult with your family members healthcare provider before trying Tai chi.

### ✓ Benefits of Tai chi

- Research indicates Tai chi shows promise with:
  - Chronic pain reduction
  - Decreasing stress, anxiety, and depression
  - Increasing energy
  - Improving aerobic capacity
  - Improving balance and flexibility
  - May also help with:
    - Improving sleep
    - Reducing falls in older adults

### ✓ What Else You Should Do

- Encourage your family member to try a non-drug treatment and document the impact on their pain in their [Pain Diary](#).
- Write down and share information about your family member's pain with their healthcare provider.



### Resources

1. Harvard Medical School. (2022). *The health benefits of tai chi*. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/the-health-benefits-of-tai-chi> Accessed 9/19/2022.
2. National Council on Aging (2021). *The health benefits of Tai Chis and How to Get Started*. [https://www.va.gov/PAINMANAGEMENT/Veteran\\_Public/Home\\_Practice.asp](https://www.va.gov/PAINMANAGEMENT/Veteran_Public/Home_Practice.asp). Accessed 2/20/2023.
3. Urits I, Schwartz RH, Orhurhu V, Maganty NV, Reilly BT, Patel PM, Wie C, Kaye AD, Mancuso KF, Kaye AJ, Viswanath O. A Comprehensive Review of Alternative Therapies for the Management of Chronic Pain Patients: Acupuncture, Tai Chi, Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine, and Chiropractic Care. *Adv Ther*. 2021 Jan;38(1):76-89. doi: 10.1007/s12325-020-01554-0. Epub 2020 Nov 12. PMID: 33184777; PMCID: PMC7854390.