

Diabetes Education

TAI CHI

Practicing the meditative rhythmic flow of tai chi works just as well as aerobic exercise and strength training for achieving realistic long-term health benefits. Some health benefits include waist size reduction, lowering of unhealthy cholesterol and improvement of muscle tone for balance and stability.

Many individuals over the age of 65 have arthritis or back pain and aerobic exercise can be hard on them. Tai chi is a low impact work out that involves no strain or tension on the bodies muscles. Tai chi is wonderful substitute or addition to a work out. Those individuals with no access to a pool can do tai chi as an alternative.

Results from a recent randomized controlled trial show that people who have a tough time with some kinds of aerobic exercise will gain similar benefits from tai chi. A healthy amount of tai chi is at least three 1-hour sessions weekly with an instructor to guide you.

Benefits of tai chi may include:

- Decreased stress, anxiety and depression
- Improved mood
- Improved aerobic capacity
- Increased energy and stamina
- Improved flexibility, balance and agility
- Improved muscle strength and definition



How to Get Started with Tai Chi

Even though the martial arts aspect of the practice could take a few years to master, tai chi is relatively easy to learn.

Look in your area for local classes or perhaps a YMCA near you. Online videos for beginners to expert can be found online.

Don't forget the proper clothing that is comfortable with flexibility. Closed toe shoes should always be worn.