



T'ai Chi for Diabetes

The following is based on information written by, and copyright to, Dr Paul Lam, to whom full acknowledgement is given.

www.taichiproductions.com

www.crystaltaichi.co.uk

How Does T'ai Chi Work For Diabetes?

Exercise can help people with Diabetes by improving the control of blood glucose level, as well as minimising the complications of diabetes.

Gentle exercises and diet have been shown by many scientific studies to prevent Diabetes. As T'ai Chi is a gentle exercise with strong emphasis on mental relaxation, it is reasonable to assume that T'ai Chi should help to prevent diabetes and improve the control and management of diabetes.

There are two other attributes of T'ai Chi that are especially helpful to people with diabetes:

Stress is shown to make the control of diabetes worse and relaxation is especially beneficial. It is well established that T'ai Chi reduces stress and improves relaxation.

Most people have problem adhering to an exercise program. T'ai Chi is shown to have a higher perseverance rate; people tend to continue doing T'ai Chi for years.

The major problems of diabetes are complications such as hypertension, heart disease, visual impairment and vascular problem. Studies have shown that T'ai Chi improves cardiorespiratory function, hypertension, muscular strength, flexibility and cholesterol level, these in turn minimise complication of diabetes.

Diabetes can cause peripheral neuropathy, a condition that the nerves of feet are damaged thus affects walking. T'ai chi has been proven to be effective in improving balance and mobility therefore makes walking easier and safer.

T'ai Chi's Many Health Benefits

Being an exercise incorporating the complete body and mind, T'ai Chi's benefits do not stop at people with diabetes. Scientific studies have shown that T'ai Chi works wonders on health, improving conditions such as arthritis, heart disease, respiratory diseases and other chronic diseases. In addition, it improves balance, prevents falls, helps posture, and builds up immunity to disease. And if that's not all, T'ai Chi improves mental illness, depression, and stress.

The mental concentration associated T'ai Chi will enhance clarity of the mind, improve relaxation and uplift mood. The immense power of the mind has not been fully estimated. As one of the most effective mind-body exercise, T'ai Chi teaches how to be mindful of the intrinsic energy leading to greater perception of self-control and empowerment.

A Special Designed Program - Tai Chi for Diabetes

T'ai Chi for Diabetes is simple, easy to learn and effective. Dr Paul Lam worked with a group of T'ai Chi practitioners, Professor Dennis Yue from Sydney University and Associate Professor Terry Diamond from University of NSW to compose this 19-movement program based on two major T'ai Chi styles, Yang and Sun style. The program includes warm-up, wind-down and Qigong exercises, a basic and an advanced set. The program is supported by Diabetes Australia and other such organizations world-wide.

The program was designed to incorporate the traditional Chinese medical concepts as well as western ones by placing emphasis on strengthening the Qi of the diabetes related energy channels.

Deeper Concepts - Chinese Medicine & The Power of Qi

The benefits of T'ai Chi, as an exercise, stress relief and well-being regime used to compliment Western Medicine is firmly established and accepted.

In a deeper, broader concept:

To the Chinese, Qi is the life energy inside a person. This has been a basic belief in most eastern cultures for thousands of years. The fundamental theory of acupuncture and Chinese medicine is based on this concept. T'ai Chi is also called "Meditation in Motion" as it incorporates Qigong as an integrated component. The gentle and slow movements stretch one's energy channels and keep them strong and supple; the rhythmic movements of the muscle, spine and joints pump energy through the whole body.

According to traditional Chinese medicine, diabetes is a deficiency of moisture and essence (yin) of the lung, spleen, kidney or all three. Enhancing life energy or Qi in the appropriate acupuncture meridians or energy channels will improve diabetes control.