

WHAT IS QIGONG

Qigong is an ancient Chinese health care system that integrates physical postures (whether moving or stationary), breathing techniques, and focused intentions. Some practices increase the Qi; others circulate it, use it to cleanse and heal the body, store it, or emit Qi to help heal others.

The word Qigong (Chi Kung) is made up of two Chinese words. Qi (pronounced chee) translated as the life force or vital-energy that flows through all things in the universe. Gong (pronounced gung) means accomplishment, or skill that is cultivated through steady practice. Together, Qigong (Chi Kung) means cultivating energy. It is a system practiced for health maintenance, healing and increasing vitality.

Qigong practices can be classified as martial, medical, or spiritual. They vary from the soft, internal styles such as Tai Chi to the more vigorous and challenging external styles of Kung Fu. However, the slow gentle movements of most Qigong forms can be easily adapted, even (and especially) for the physically challenged and can be practiced by all age groups.

There are a wide variety of Qigong practices & can be practiced anywhere and at any time.

Qigong creates an awareness of and influences dimensions of our being that are not part of traditional exercise programs. Most other types of exercise do not involve the meridian system used in acupuncture nor do they emphasize the importance of adding mind intent and breathing techniques to physical movements. When these dimensions are added, the benefits of exercise increase exponentially.

The gentle, rhythmic movements of Qigong reduce stress, build stamina, increase vitality, and enhance the immune system. Improves cardiovascular, respiratory, circulatory, lymphatic and digestive functions.

Those who maintain a consistent practice of Qigong find that it helps one regain a youthful vitality, maintain health even into old age and helps speed recovery from illness. Western scientific research confirms that Qigong reduces hypertension and the incidence of falling in the aged population. One of the more important long-term effects is that Qigong reestablishes the body/mind/soul connection.

People do Qigong to maintain health, heal their bodies, calm their minds, and reconnect with their spirit. When these three aspects of our being are integrated, it encourages a positive outlook on life and helps eliminate harmful attitudes and behaviors. Creates a balanced life style, brings harmony, stability, and enjoyment

Anyone can enrich their lives by adding Qigong to their daily routine. Here are a few examples:

- Children learn to channel their energy and develop increased concentration;
- Workers use Qigong to reduce stress and enhance focus;
- Seniors participate in gentle movements to enhance balance and their quality of life;
- Caregivers embrace a practice to develop their ability to help others;
- Prisons have instituted Qigong programs to restore balance in inmates lives;
- Midwives use Qigong techniques to ease child birth.

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