



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

BENEFITS OF TAI CHI

The ancient art of Tai Chi uses gentle flowing movements to reduce the stress of today's busy lifestyles and improve health. Tai Chi is sometimes described as "meditation in motion" because it promotes serenity through gentle movements — connecting the mind and body. Originally developed in ancient China for self-defense, Tai Chi evolved into a graceful form of exercise, that's now used for stress reduction and to help with a variety of other health conditions.

To do Tai Chi, you perform a series of postures or movements in a slow, graceful manner. Each posture flows into the next without pause, ensuring that your body is in constant motion. Tai Chi has many different styles, such as Chen, Kung, Chih, etc. Each style may have its own subtle emphasis on various Tai Chi principles and methods.

Regardless of the variation, all forms of Tai Chi include rhythmic patterns of movement that are coordinated with breathing to help you achieve a sense of inner calm. The concentration required for Tai Chi forces you to live in the present moment, putting aside distressing thoughts. Stress, anxiety and tension should melt away as you focus on the present, and the effects may last well after you stop your Tai Chi session. Tai Chi also might help your overall health, although it's not a substitute for traditional medical care.

In Ahwatukee YMCA we perform five different forms of Tai Chi. These forms are gentle and suitable for everyone. Since Tai Chi emphasizes technique over strength and is low impact, it is suitable for all age groups including people who otherwise may not exercise.