



- **For Self Defense**

Although Tai Chi was made famous because of its health benefits, it originated as a very simple self-defense system. It has only thirteen physical skills to master. These skills are eight hand movements and five ways of stepping. With these thirteen forms one may redirect an attack from any direction without harming the attacker. It is the enlightened persons martial art. There is no attacking in Tai Chi. There are no hard strikes or kicks.

There are no grinding holds or chokes. It uses soft to overcome hard, yielding to overcome force, and calmness to overcome aggression.



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ST. JOHN  
HOSPITAL  
& MEDICAL  
CENTER

## Tai Chi

We welcome the chance to help  
you live a healthier life



ST. JOHN HOSPITAL  
& MEDICAL CENTER

## Why Practice Tai Chi?

- **For Spiritual Development**

Less well known is the spiritual cultivation aspect of Tai Chi. Tai Chi uses the breath synchronized with movement to put us in a meditative state of mind. When this is achieved we make contact with the source of energy in us called Qi. Qi is a living energy that fills us and surrounds us.

Over time we gain greater and greater control over our inner Qi. The more control we have over our inner Qi the more control we gain over the more universal external Qi. (This is best symbolized as our outer circumstances affect us less and we can effect them more.) What does this mean?

There is no limit to how far you can develop in Tai Chi. The Chinese ancients often sought enlightened immortality. This is a state that is said to be achieved when your personal Qi perfectly merges with the universal Qi.

- **For Health**

A study at Emory University found that elderly people who learned Tai Chi were 50% less likely to suffer falls. This is a significant figure considering the sixth largest cause of death for older Americans is complications from falling injuries.

John Hopkins University reports that Tai Chi can lower systolic blood pressure. Research further suggests that Tai Chi improves heart and lung function, reduces stress and improves confidence.



Western medical studies have shown a large increase in levels of superoxide dismutase after only two months of regular Tai Chi practice. Superoxide dismutase is the enzyme that defends our bodies from free radicals. Free radicals are what cause our bodies to age. They cause wrinkles, age spots, weaken cartilage and joints.

It is a total transformation and union with the universe that all great religions try to lead us to.

