Tai Chi for Health & Fall Prevention

Objectives
After the presentation, participants will be able to:
   Identify three health benefits of Tai Chi for Health for residents & staff.
   Experience easy to learn tai chi movements which promote relaxation.
   Name two ways tai chi improves balance and prevents falls.
Tai Chi for Health and Fall Prevention

An evidenced based program which improves balance of mind, body and spirit.
According to the Mayo Clinic’s website (mayoclinic.com)

Preliminary evidence suggests that tai chi may offer numerous benefits beyond stress reduction, including:

- Improving balance, flexibility and muscle strength
- Reducing falls in older adults
- Improving sleep quality
- Reducing anxiety and depression
Mayo Benefits, continued

- Relieving chronic pain
- Lowering blood pressure
- Improving cardiovascular fitness in older adults
- Slows bone loss in women after menopause
- Increasing energy, endurance and agility
Topics

- What is tai chi?
- The benefits and the evidence
- What is a Tai Chi for Health program?
- Let us try it
What is Tai Chi?

- Tai chi is a slow moving, meditative exercise
- Traditional Tai Chi – formally used mainly for martial arts
- One of the most effective mind and body exercises for health and well being
Tai Chi has many styles:

- Wu
- Chen
- Yang
- Sun
Dr. Paul Lam, MD

- Developed with medical and tai chi experts
- Adapted to be safe for all fitness levels
- Easy to learn
- Fun
- Partnered with Arthritis Foundation
“I don’t understand why no one ever taught me how to breathe like this before” –Walter, age 97 with his wife, Rachel, age 97

“I love feeling the flow of tai chi through my body.” –Rachel
The Benefits

- Better balance, fall prevention
- Mental balance, relaxation
- Enjoyable activity
- Socializing
Tai Chi for Osteoarthritis


“I have severe arthritis in my knees. Tai chi is what keeps me going!” – Rhea
Tai Chi for Diabetes

Paul Lam, Sarah M Dennis, Terry H Diamond, Nicholas Zwar. Improving Glycaemic and BP control in type 2 diabetes The effectiveness of Tai Chi.

Australian Family Physician Vol. 37, No. 10, October 2008 P884–887

- Improve HbA1C
- Improve quality of life
- Improve BP
Tai chi for fall prevention

Journal American Geriatrics Society
AUGUST 2007–VOL. 55, NO. 8
A Randomized, Controlled Trial of tai chi for the Prevention of Falls: The Central Sydney tai chi Trial. Alexander Voukelatos, MA (Psychol), Robert G. Cumming, PhD, Stephen R. Lord, DSc, and Chris Rissel, PhD.
Moving is the Best Medicine

Tai Chi Research Found:

- relieves pain
- relieves stiffness
- relieves fatigue of arthritis
- increases sense of well being
- improves reach or balance

Leigh Callahan, PhD.
University North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine
Thurston Arthritis Research Center

You Tube:
Benefits of Tai Chi on arthritis pain
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8iHq4fC_R_A
Summary of Tai Chi and Health Research Results

- 233 articles studying tai chi for health
- 41 articles studying falls and balance (including vestibular problems)
- 23 articles studying tai chi in hypertension and cardiovascular problems
- 33 articles studying impact on health in the elderly

Tai chi is effective for fall prevention
“I feel rushed all the time, but with tai chi I am *supposed* to go slowly.”

–Dorothy
Tai Chi for Health Programs

- Safe
- Enjoyable
- Effective
Safety

- Not all tai chi forms are safe
- Special care must be incorporated in the forms
- The teaching methods
- Effective
  - Body
  - Mind
  - Quality of life
“Tai chi calms me. It helps me to relax. I feel a sense of peace.” – Arlene
Tai chi is often described as “meditation in motion,” but it might well be called “medication in motion.”

This gentle form of exercise can prevent or ease many ills of aging and could be the perfect activity for the rest of your life.

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Let’s Try It

Stay within your comfort zone
Mayo Benefits, continued

- Improving overall feelings of well being
Tai Chi programs recognized as evidence based by the Center for Disease Control in the prevention of falls:

- **Tai Ji Quan**: Moving for Better Balance® (TJQMBB) is a research-based balance training regimen designed for older adults and people with balance disorders. Fuzhong Li, Ph.D., a Senior Scientist at Oregon Research Institute, developed the program. [http://tjqmbb.org/](http://tjqmbb.org/)

- Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention developed by Paul Lam, M.D. for the Arthritis Foundation. [http://taichiforhealthinstitute.org/](http://taichiforhealthinstitute.org/)
“Yes, Toto, we are in Kansas and we have the best of both worlds—ancient health practices and the latest medical advances!”
Mae Lovell, RN
Certified Tai Chi for Health Instructor

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