

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO HOSPITAL  
THE CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

# YOGA & TAI CHI

## WHAT ARE YOGA AND TAI CHI?

Yoga and tai chi (pronounced “tie chee”) are gentle forms of exercise originating in the Far East. They have been practiced for thousands of years and focus on the connection between mind and body. Both yoga and tai chi can be used for mental and physical therapy.

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## FOUR THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOGA AND TAI CHI:

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1.

By using breathing, meditation and posture techniques, yoga unites the mind, breath and body. There are a variety of forms of yoga that are practiced around the world. The Center for Integrative Medicine teaches *Hatha Yoga*, which focuses on hundreds of different postures (or *asanas*) that can be performed and modified to fit your specific needs. Through *Hatha Yoga*, you'll learn a sense of balance that you can apply to your entire life.

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2.

Tai chi is a mild form of exercise derived from martial arts. It enhances mental and physical health through three major components: meditation, deep breathing and slow, graceful movements. Today there are five principal schools of tai chi. The Center for Integrative Medicine teaches a short, basic form called *Yang* style.

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3.

Anyone can benefit from yoga or tai chi. The practice of yoga and tai chi has been shown to increase response to immunization, decrease blood pressure, chronic pain and stress, and improve range of motion, alertness and sleep.

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4.

Yoga and tai chi techniques can be modified to fit your age, experience, athletic ability and/or health condition. Even if your movement is limited or you are in a wheelchair, you can practice tai chi. Practicing yoga and tai chi is generally safe and without side effects.

# WHAT HAPPENS DURING YOUR CLASS:

## BEFORE YOUR CLASS

For your comfort, please wear loose, relaxed clothing and flexible shoes. Please inform your instructor if you have any health problems, recent injuries, are pregnant or if you experience dizziness, shortness of breath, headaches or severe pain. Before your yoga or tai chi class, you will be asked to sign a release and waiver of liability statement.

## DURING YOUR CLASS

Yoga and tai chi classes are held in a relaxing environment and usually last from 60 to 75 minutes. Classes begin with warm-up exercises and stretches. Yoga classes consist of focused breathing followed by a series of *asanas* meant to gently work the entire body. Similarly, tai chi classes follow warm-ups with a series of 24 slow, meditative forms. Each form has a nature-based name, such as “wave hands like clouds” or “grasp the bird’s tail.” In both yoga and tai chi, you will be given time to meditate and relax at the end of class.

## AFTER YOUR CLASS

You’ll leave yoga and tai chi classes feeling relaxed and stress-free. It is normal to experience soreness after your class, as you will use many new and different muscles. Soreness should subside after a few classes.

# CONDITIONS HELPED:

**ANXIETY**

**ARTHRITIS**

**ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS AND EMPHYSEMA**

**BALANCE**

**CHRONIC PAIN**

**DEPRESSION**

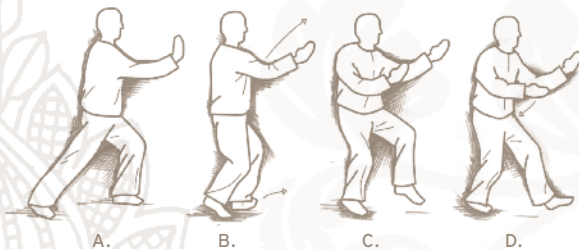
**HEADACHES**

**HEART DISEASE**

**HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE**

**OSTEOPOROSIS**

**SLEEP DISORDERS**



*fig. 1 - Tai chi is composed of 24 linked postures. They are given names that relate to the movements being performed. The 5th posture, or “playing the lute,” resembles a person holding a lute or guitar.*

## SIGN UP FOR A CLASS

Sign-up for classes is first come, first served. You can register in advance for a yoga or tai chi class by contacting The Center for Integrative Medicine at 720-848-1090. You can also sign up in person immediately before the class at the Outpatient Pavilion at the Anschutz Medical Campus. Please contact The Center for Integrative Medicine for class schedules and location information.

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Both yoga and tai chi classes cost \$10-\$15 per class. You may also purchase packages of 10 classes for \$75. It is best to attend consecutive classes, but packages may be redeemed over a one-year period. Class payment may be made in advance by cash, check, Visa, MasterCard or Discover, or at the door by cash or check.

*All prices are subject to change.*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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*By making this information available, the University of Colorado Hospital and The Center for Integrative Medicine do not promise or guarantee the effectiveness of this integrative therapy. For any serious conditions, we recommend that you contact your physician before trying any new therapy.*



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