



The ancient Chinese discovered that it was possible to develop and direct the body's vital energy, or Chi, in particular ways. It could be nurtured to help prevent disease and premature ageing. It could be made to flow from one person to another and thereby used to help heal the sick. It could also be employed with powerful effect in the martial arts. The exercise systems used to stimulate and channel human energy came to be known as Chi Kung, which literally means "energy exercise". The goal of Chi Kung exercise is to stimulate the flow of energy internally in the body so that it effectively rushes through and clears the entire network of Chi channels, or "meridians". Extensive research has been done over the years to develop a system of exercise that would speed up the blood circulation without placing an intolerable strain on the lungs. The results drew on the accumulated wisdom of Chinese Taoist and Buddhist breathing practices and the practices and disciplines of the martial arts. One type of Chi Kung uses a series of breathing exercises to control the internal movement of Chi while the body remains virtually motionless .

Is chi kung the same as qigong?

Yes, they are the same. "Chi kung" is the usual English spelling, whereas "qigong" is the Romanized Chinese spelling. In Romanized Chinese, q is pronounced like the English ch'; and o like the English u. Hence, both "chi kung" and qigong" should be pronounced like the English "ch'i gung".

Is chi kung the same as Taijiquan?

They are different, although Taijiquan (if it is practiced the way traditional masters practiced it) makes extensive use of chi kung. Basically, Taijiquan is a martial art, whereas chi kung is a collective term for various arts of energy, which may or may not be used for martial art purposes. The movements of some chi kung types resemble those of Taijiquan, whereas many other chi kung movements are totally different from typical Taijiquan movements.

What are the benefits of practicing chi kung?

There are many wonderful benefits derived from practicing chi kung, and they may be generalized into the following five categories:

- Curing illness and promoting health
- Enhancing vitality and developing internal force
- Promoting youthfulness and longevity
- Expanding the mind and the intellect
- Spiritual cultivation

Many chi kung types focus on only one or two of the above categories, but a few cover all the five. For example, most types of medical chi kung aim mainly at curing illness, virtually all sexual types of chi kung emphasize solely on youthfulness, whereas Shaolin Cosmos Chi Kung touches on all the above five categories of benefits.

How is chi kung related to kung fu?

All great kung fu makes use of energy training (which is chi kung) to develop internal force, without which it remains at its external, mechanical level, considered by Chinese martial artists as rough and low-class. Hence, a kung fu master may look, and actually is, gentle, yet with his internal force he can cause much damage to his opponent if he wishes. Moreover, his internal force does not diminish with age, and he can apply it for peaceful use in his daily living. Unlike in many other systems of martial arts where the training itself often results in physical as well as emotional injuries, kung fu training with chi kung enhances harmonious chi flow, thus promotes health, vitality and longevity.

EIGHT PIECES OF BROCADE



Chi Kung

- Takes as little twenty minutes a day
- Builds a foundation of good health
- Is easy to learn
- Makes you feel great

1) Double Hands Hold Up the Heavens to Regulate Sanjiao

Purpose: To regulate the Sanjiao (Triple Burner) and increase chi circulation in the front of the body.

Benefits: Deep soft breathing helps to lower your heartbeat and blood pressure. Stretching helps contribute to the relaxation of stiff and tense muscles. Standing up straight helps realign the back muscles and the spine. Many Chinese healers believe that this exercise helps regulate and improve the heart, lungs, stomach, spleen, and liver. It stimulates the internal organs in the upper trunk area. The Triple Warmer or Triple Burner refers to the heart, lungs, and stomach. A clear and peaceful mind reduces negative stress on the body. Works the Conception vessel meridian. 24 times

2) Left—Right Open the Bow like Shooting a Hawk.

Purpose: To strengthen the waist and kidneys.

Benefits: Horse stances condition and strengthen the legs, knees, waist and back muscles. Shoulders, biceps and forearms are conditioned and strengthened. Many Chinese healers believe that this exercise helps regulate and improve the kidneys. Balance and brain functions are improved by coordinated movements. Stretching helps contribute to the relaxation of stiff and tense muscles. Standing up straight in a horse stance helps realign the back muscles and the spine. A clear and peaceful mind reduces negative stress on the body. Increased heart rate and breathing rate provide some cardiovascular benefit. Using both sides of the body (mirroring in a movement form) can have positive effects on the structural alignment of the body and enhance coordination. Slow, deep and regular breathing positively effects mood, energy levels, and alertness; as well as improving the mechanical functioning of the lungs. Exercises the eye muscles. 24 times (12 each)

3) To Adjust and Regulate the Spleen and Stomach, Lift Singularly

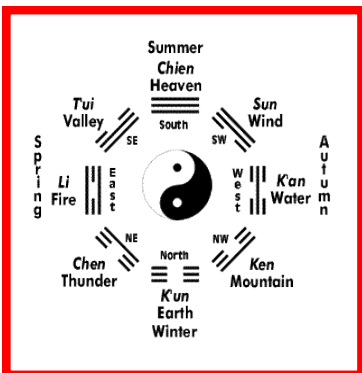
Purpose: To adjust and regulate the chi in the spleen, stomach and liver.

Benefits: Conditioning and stretching the arm, shoulder, back, and abdominal muscles. Opening up the chest for deeper breathing. Many Chinese healers believe that this exercise helps regulate and improve the spleen and stomach. Increased heart rate and breathing rate provide some cardiovascular benefit. Using both sides of the body (mirroring in a movement form) can have positive effects on the structural alignment of the body and enhance coordination. Slow, deep and regular breathing positively effects mood, energy levels, and alertness; as well as improving the mechanical functioning of the lungs. 24 times

4) Like a Cow Looking Over its Shoulder to Gaze at the Moon

Purpose: To cure illnesses caused by weakness of the five Yin organs, and injuries from the seven emotions.

Benefits: This is regarded as one of the most powerful of the Ba Duan Jin exercises as it has a very strong effect on the central nervous system and the circulation of blood and Chi to the head. It inspires the power of the kidneys: Strengthens the activity of the eyeballs, neck and shoulder muscles. It also helps relieve high blood pressure and hardening of the arteries. Stretching helps contribute to the relaxation of stiff and tense muscles. Using both sides of the body (mirroring in a movement form) can have positive effects on the structural alignment of the body and enhance coordination. Slow, deep and regular breathing brings extra oxygen into your blood. 24 times each side



5) Sway the Head and Swing the Tail to get rid of the Heart Fire

Purpose: To get rid of heartburn and loosen up the leg muscles.

Benefits: Most of the qigong and traditional Chinese medical literature says that this exercise benefits the heart, and gets rid of "heart fire." Exercising the lungs (metal) helps absorb the heat and control the fire, the heart fire - heartburn (*Hsin For* - heart fire).

The horse stance will strengthen and condition the legs and lower back. Moving while in deeper horse stances will have some aerobic conditioning effect if the exercise is done with many repetitions.

Bending and turning at the waist will strengthen and stretch the hip, abdominal, and lower back muscles.

The upper back and triceps will be tightened and stretched as you turn and look forward when facing the side.

The spine is gently turned to effect realignment and prevent stiffness. 12 times each side



6) Two Hands Hold the Feet to Strengthen the Kidneys & Waist

Purpose: To strengthen the kidneys and waist, also strengthen the leg muscles, tendon & bones in the trunk.

Benefits: Stretching and lengthening the muscles of the lower back.

Inversions bring more blood into the upper torso.

Works both the quadriceps and hamstrings.

Both hip flexors and abductors are challenged.

Massage increases circulation and feelings of pleasure to the lower back area.

Stimulates various meridians in the body. 16 times

7) Screw the Fist with Fiery Eyes to Increase Chi Li

Purpose: To raise the spirit of vitality, strengthen the chi flow and increase muscular strength.

Benefits: Horse stances strengthen the thighs, back, and cardiovascular system.

Shoulders and wrists are exercised.

Balance and coordination are improved.

Angry and tense feelings are dispelled.

Eye muscles and face muscles are exercised.

Breathing is deep and frequent - additional oxygen is supplied to the blood.

In traditional Chinese medical theory this movement helps stimulate and revitalize the liver.

Emulation of the fighting spirit helps engender courage and toughness. 8 times each side

8) Seven Disorders and Hundreds of Illnesses Disappear and are Left Behind You

Purpose: To smooth out the chi flow from the top of your head to the bottom of the feet.

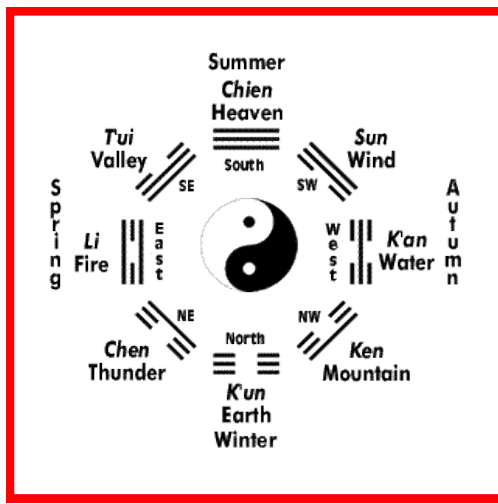
Benefits: It's chiefly used for regulating the meridians all over the body and improving their functions.

When directing qi downward by the will, the blood pressure can also be reduced.

Strengthens the calf, thigh and feet. 24 times each



These invigorating Chi Gong exercises help to stimulate your immune system, strengthen the internal organs, and increase your energy. Practicing every day becomes a positive habit that will benefit you greatly. Done alone or as a warm up for your Tai Chi training, these movements will help you balance yourself both mentally and physically. Enjoy !!



Exercise

I Ch'ing Trigram

Parts of the Body Affected

1. Hold Up the Heavens

South, Summer
Ch'ien, Heaven, Sky, Air
Intense Yang

Heart, Small Intestine, Stomach, Lungs
(The Triple Warmer)

2. Draw the Bow

Southwest, Mid-Summer
Sun, Wind, Yang

Kidneys, Spleen, Waist, Eyes, Legs

3. Lift Singularly

North, Winter
K'un, Earth
Intense Yin

Spleen, Kidneys, Bladder, Pancreas

4. Gaze Back at the Moon

West, Autumn
K'an, Water, Yang-Yin

Lungs, Immune System, Large Intestine

5. Sway the Head & Swing the Tail

Northwest, Mid-Autumn
Ken, Mountain, Yin-Yang

Heart, Waist, Legs

6. Two Hands Holds the Feet

Southeast, Mid-Spring
Tui, Lake, Yang-Yin

Kidneys, Waist, Legs, Back

7. Corkscrew the Fist

Spring, East
Li, Fire, Yin-Yang

Liver, Gallbladder, Blood, Eyes

8. Seven Disorders

Northeast, Mid-Winter
Chen, Thunder, Yin

Immune System, Calves, Feet