

Long-term Tai Chi Exercise Improves Psychological Well-being of Older Adults

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Abstract

Considerable body of literature showed that Tai Chi (TC) had beneficial effects in patients with psychological disorders, such as depression and anxiety. However, few studies reported the psychological effects of TC in healthy older adults. This study was designed to test if TC exercise has same beneficial effects in healthy older adults as in psychological patients. Methods: A population based study was carried out in the village of Chenjiagou, northern China, where TC originated 500 years ago. Total 784 residents aged over 50 years were recruited. Those with chronic diseases were excluded. Considering the possible residual effects of TC exercise, those who exercised TC occasionally and those who ceased TC for any reason were also excluded. 153 male and 298 female non-TC players served as control. Male and female TC groups consisted of 133 male and 42 female TC players respectively. All TC Players had exercised TC of Chen's style over a year. All participants were face-to-face interviewed to evaluate psychological status with 17-items Hamilton depression rate score (HDRS) and 24-items Hamilton anxiety rate score (HARS). Results The demographic characteristics (age, height, weight, and BMI) of male and female participants did not differ between control and TC players. Marriage status analysis showed no difference between control and TC groups. There was no significant distribution difference of education levels and occupations (manual labors and mental worker) between control and TC groups. However, as shown in the table, scores of HDRS and HARS in both male and female TC players were significantly lower than the scores of corresponding control groups. Sleeping conditions of male TC player was significantly better than control ($p=0.003$). Conclusion: Results of this study demonstrate that long-term TC provides beneficial psychological effects in older adults. The clinical significance of this effect should be investigated in further studies.



Biography:

Yiju Zhao got his MD degree from Zhejiang University and Ph.D from Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences. He has a broad research interest in cardiovascular disease. His recent interest is focused on Tai chi and its clinical application.

Speaker Publications:

1. Lavretsky H, Alstein LL, Olmstead RE, et al (2011) Complementary use of tai chi chih augments escitalopram treatment of geriatric depression: a randomized controlled trial. *Am J Geriatr Psychiatry*. 19(10):839-50.
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3. Chan AW, Yu DS, Choi KC (2017) Effects of tai chi qigong on psychosocial well-being among hidden elderly, using elderly neighborhood volunteer approach: a pilot randomized controlled trial. *Clin Interv Aging*. 12:85-96.
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5. Yu R, Woo J, Chan AS, et al (2014) A Chinese Chan-based mind-body intervention improves psychological well-being and physical health of community-dwelling elderly: a pilot study. *Clin Interv Aging*. 9:727-36.

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Effects of TC Practice on Psychological Parameters

		Control (M±SD)	TC(M±SD)	P
Male	HRSD	1.95±3.88	1.15±2.20	0.031
	HARS	2.26±3.94	1.18±2.40	0.006
	Sleep	1.36±0.74	1.14±0.43	0.003
Femal	HRSD	2.90±4.41	1.76±2.79	0.027
	HARS	3.21±4.84	1.44±2.14	0.001
	Sleep	1.59±0.87	1.38±0.73	0.103

HRSD: 17-item Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression

HARS: 24-item Hamilton Anxiety Rating

Scale

