



## The Harvard Medical School Guide to Tai Chi: 12 Weeks to a Healthy Body, Strong Heart, and Sharp Mind (Harvard Health Publications)

By Peter Wayne

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Conventional medical science on the Chinese art of Tai Chi now shows what Tai Chi masters have known for centuries: regular practice leads to more vigor and flexibility, better balance and mobility, and a sense of well-being. Cutting-edge research from Harvard Medical School also supports the long-standing claims that Tai Chi also has a beneficial impact on the health of the heart, bones, nerves and muscles, immune system, and the mind. This research provides fascinating insight into the underlying physiological mechanisms that explain how Tai Chi actually works.

Dr. Peter M. Wayne, a longtime Tai Chi teacher and a researcher at Harvard Medical School, developed and tested protocols similar to the simplified program he includes in this book, which is suited to people of all ages, and can be done in just a few minutes a day. This book includes:

- The basic program, illustrated by more than 50 photographs
- Practical tips for integrating Tai Chi into everyday activities
- An introduction to the traditional principles of Tai Chi
- Up-to-date summaries of the research literature on the health benefits of Tai Chi
- How Tai Chi can enhance work productivity, creativity, and sports performance
- And much more

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### Editorial Review

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Tai chi can be described as “meditation in motion.” Blending low to moderate aerobic activity with meditation, tai chi offers health benefits with only a minimal risk of injury. Rewards of tai chi may include greater flexibility and range of motion, increased coordination, better breathing, and more efficient posture. It is a useful exercise in preventing falls. It also improves balance and movement in people with Parkinson’s disease. As scientific research on this training regimen moves forward, tai chi might prove valuable in other ways, such as managing chronic pain and enhancing mood. Authors Wayne (a Harvard Medical School researcher and tai chi practitioner-teacher) and Fuerst (a medical writer) distill the essence of tai chi into eight active ingredients: awareness, intention, structural integration, active relaxation, strengthening and flexibility, natural breathing, social support, and embodied spirituality. They also present a practical, simplified 12-week tai chi training program that requires 45–60 minutes per day. Photographs illustrating poses and exercises are included. Tai chi is an intriguing form of mind-body exercise that can readily be integrated into routine daily activities. --Tony Miksanek

### Review

“*The Harvard Medical School Guide to Tai Chi* is a significant milestone in the integration of Eastern and Western medicine. It deftly summarizes the scientific evidence for the healing potential of this traditional Chinese system of body movement and gives readers practical advice for using it in everyday life. I recommend it highly.”—Andrew Weil, MD, Professor of Medicine, University of Arizona, and author of *8 Steps to Optimum Health*

“Dr. Wayne gives us a magnificent and useful contribution for the betterment of our health and well-being through the proper integration of Tai Chi into our lives.”—Herbert Benson, MD, author of *The Relaxation Response* and Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School

“Peter Wayne is that rare individual who is sufficiently ‘bilingual’ to introduce Tai Chi to a largely open-minded yet skeptical medical community and to sensitively and movingly celebrate its timeless poetry, power, and appeal. This is a book for all to learn from and enjoy.”—David Eisenberg, MD, Harvard School of Public Health and the Samueli Institute, and Former Chief of the Division of Research and Education in Complementary and Integrative Medical Therapies, Harvard Medical School

“Evidence has shown that unhealthy lifestyle is the cause of most if not all chronic conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, and heart disease. Dr. Wayne’s book, with his expertise in medical research and Tai Chi, is a significant step towards modernizing Tai Chi—essential to making Tai Chi a central part of practical and effective solutions to the epidemic of chronic disease.”—Dr. Paul Lam, director of the Tai Chi for Health Institute and author of *Teaching Tai Chi Effectively* and *Tai Chi for Beginners*

“Peter Wayne has long been a leader in scientific research into how Tai Chi boosts health and well-being. In this brilliant book, he blends rigorous Western science with Eastern wisdom to present an illuminating and thoroughly modern view of a wonderful, life-enhancing art. I recommend it highly to anyone interested in Tai Chi, from novice to advanced practitioner.”—Yang Yang, PhD, director, Center for Taiji and Qigong Studies, and author of *Taijiquan: The Art of Nurturing, The Science of Power*

“Highly readable and deeply informative. . . . This book has the potential of once and for all dispelling any lingering myths that Tai Chi and Qigong, and Western science’s growing understanding of its uses, are anything less than a profound health revolution that can help prevent or treat the majority of health

challenges, and ultimately may save society hundreds of billions if not trillions in future annual health care costs. *The Harvard Medical School Guide to Tai Chi* may well be that point we look back to and say, 'That was the tipping point that unleashed the building wave of Tai Chi, which has now transformed modern health care.'"—Bill Douglas, founder of World Tai Chi & Qigong Day and author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to T'ai Chi & QiGong*

#### About the Author

Peter Wayne, PhD, is Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and the Director of Research for the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine, jointly based at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Wayne served as the Director of Tai Chi and Mind-Body Research Programs at the Osher Research Center and Founding Research Director at the New England School of Acupuncture. He has more than thirty-five years of training experience in Tai Chi and Qigong and is an internationally recognized teacher of these practices.

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