Reducing Falls by Improving Balance

Taiji (Tai Chi) for Balance – Level 1

Lori Brohm, DM, MBA, PT
OHA HEN Project Manager
Fall Facts

• 1 out of 5 falls cause a serious injury
• 2.5 million older adults treated for falls yearly in ED
• 700,000 hospitalizations for falls each year
  – 250,000 for hip fractures
• 95% of hip fractures caused by falls, usually falling sideways
• Falls most common cause of TBI
• $34 billion annually for falls, direct medical costs

www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationSafety/Falls/adultfalls.html
Fall Risk Factors

• Weakness, especially lower body
• Vitamin D deficiency
• Difficulty with walking and balance
• Certain medications (tranquilizers, sedatives, or antidepressants)
• Vision problems
• Foot pain or insensitivity, poor footwear
• Home hazards (broken or uneven floors and steps, throw rugs/clutter, no handrails, pets)

www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationSafety/Falls/adultfalls.html
How Taiji Improves Balance

- **Mindful Movement**
  - Training the brain to stop thinking and start experiencing
  - Lessen distraction and “observe”

- **Coordination**
  - Builds proprioception
  - Stepping forward/back, to corners and side to side, weight shifting

- **Physical Balance**
  - Targets postural stability, core strength, leg strength, flexibility, range of motion, reflexes

- **Muscle Strength**
  - Strengthens muscles, ligaments and tendons
  - Slow movement, no resistance
Components of Taiji for Balance – Level 1

- Warm Up Massage
- Warm Up Joints
- Breathwork
- Large Body Movements
- Brain Body Connection Exercises
- Balance Weight Shifts
Eight Basic Movements: Level 1
Clinical Studies

- Falls Among Older Adults: An Overview – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

  - Tai Chi as an intervention to improve balance and reduce falls in older adults: A systematic and meta-analytical review.
    - Leung DP1, Chan CK, Tsang HW, Tsang WW, Jones AY

  - Tai Chi as a balance improvement exercise for older adults: a systematic review.
    - Liu H, Frank A

  - An integrative review of Tai Chi research: an alternative form of physical activity to improve balance and prevent falls in older adults.
    - Wooton AC

  - Review of Tai Chi as an effective exercise on falls prevention in elderly.
    - Schleicher MM1, Wedam L, Wu G
Falls Assessment Tools

• STEADI – Older Adult Fall Prevention Toolkit
    • Tests, fact sheets, case studies, provider videos, patient educational materials/brochures

• Timed Up and Go (TUG) Test
Taiji for Balance: Level 1 Training

– Youngstown, OH: April 30-31
– Zanesville, OH: May 21-22

– For PTs, OTs, Ex Phys, Activity Directors, Yoga Instructors, Personal/Group Trainers, etc.

– Lucy Bartimole, BA, PT, RYT200, Taiji for Balance Developer/Teacher/Trainer
  • www.shiftgrandview.com/ttt (to register)
Questions?