

Research suggests tai chi outperforms conventional exercise in improving mobility and balance for seniors

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While tai chi is understood to be beneficial for functional mobility and balance in older adults, such benefits are not well understood due to a

large variance in research study protocols and observations.

Now, a new research review and analysis shows that tai chi can indeed induce greater improvement in functional mobility and balance in relatively healthy older adults compared to conventional exercise.

Researchers examined 12 studies involving 2,901 participants. Generally, tai chi, compared to conventional exercise, produces the following performance results:

- The time to complete 50-foot walking was 1.84 seconds faster.
- The time to maintain a one-leg stance was 6 seconds longer when eyes were open and 1.65 seconds longer when eyes were closed.
- Individuals improved their timed-up-and-go [test performance](#) by 0.18 points, indicating quicker standing, walking, and sitting.
- Individuals taking the functional reach test showed significant improvement with a standardized mean difference of 0.7, suggesting a noteworthy positive impact on the ability to reach and perform [daily activities](#).

Secondary analyses revealed that the use of tai chi with relatively short duration (

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