

# Six-month tai chi program improves physical activity in CHD

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(HealthDay)—A six-month tai chi program is safe and improves

physical activity (PA), weight, and quality of life for patients with coronary heart disease who decline to enroll in cardiac rehabilitation, according to a study published online Oct. 11 in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*.

Elena Salmoirago-Blotcher, M.D., Ph.D., from the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, and colleagues conducted a phase 2 trial to examine the feasibility, safety, and acceptability of a tai chi intervention and to assess its effects on PA, fitness, weight, and quality of life among patients with [coronary heart disease](#) declining [cardiac rehabilitation](#) enrollment. Participants were randomized to a "LITE" condition (two sessions per week for 12 weeks; 16 participants) or a "PLUS" condition (three sessions per week for 12 weeks and then maintenance classes for 12 weeks; 13 participants).

The researchers found that retention at nine months was 90 and 88 percent for LITE and PLUS, respectively. There were no serious tai chi-related adverse events. There were significant mean between-group differences favoring the PLUS group at three and six months for moderate-to-vigorous PA (100.33 and 111.62 minutes per week, respectively), with a trend toward significance at nine months; for the percentage change in weight; and for quality of life. Within and between groups there were no changes in aerobic fitness.

"Tai chi could be an effective option to improve PA in this high-risk population," the authors write.

One author is founder and sole owner of the Tree of Life Tai Chi Center.

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