

GENERAL GUIDELINES ABOUT WARM-UP EXERCISES

Always do gentle warm-up exercises before you begin Tai Chi (or any exercise), and cool down exercises afterward. The exercises described here have been specially designed for people with arthritis or related musculoskeletal conditions.

Caution: If your arthritis or joint condition is severe and painful, contact your doctor or physical therapist before beginning this or any exercise program. Take special care to move with awareness and caution when a flare-up occurs.

More Guidelines:

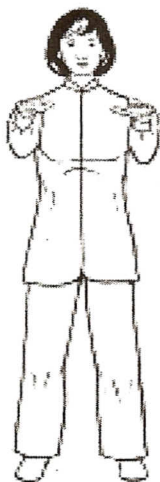
- Walk around at your own pace for a couple of minutes before doing these movements.
- Move through the exercises slowly, gently and with attention to how your body responds.
- Respect your comfort ranges. Adapt each exercise to your individual situation. If you experience any discomfort or have doubt about performing a movement, **don't do it**. Consult your doctor or physical therapist before proceeding.
- At first, limit your stretches to 80% of your normal range of motion. Then gradually increase the stretch as your body becomes more flexible.
- Hold the stretch long enough to allow your muscles to relax. Do not bounce. Bouncing to increase a stretch can actually cause injuries and tighten the muscles you want to loosen.
- Repeat each exercise 3 to 5 times, alternating sides when appropriate.
- Do them slowly, gently, and with care.

The Right Stance

Stand upright but relaxed, and imagine your body is aligned along an invisible string that passes through your ear, shoulders, hips and heels. Tuck your chin in slightly and focus your eyes straight ahead.

WARM-UP EXERCISES

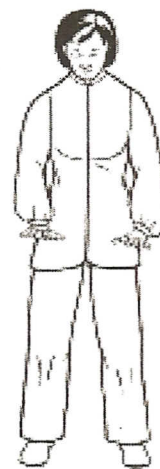
Neck 1



a. As you inhale, bring both hands up slowly.

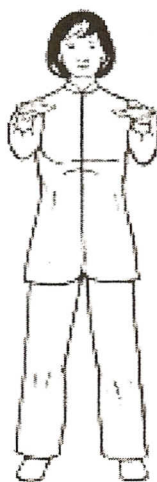


b. Turn your palms and bring them towards your chest, push your chin backwards gently.



c. Exhaling, press your hands down slowly. At the same time, slowly bring your head down.

Neck 2



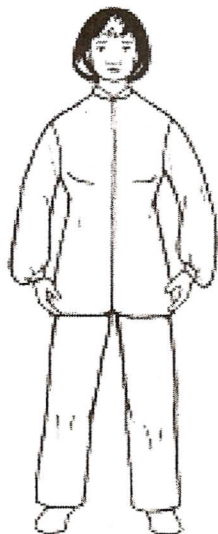
a. Lift up both hands, turn your left hand inwards and push your right hand down near your hip. Look at your left palm.



b. Move your left hand to the left, turning your head slowly to the left, then come back to face the front. Change palms.

WARM-UP EXERCISES

Shoulder 1

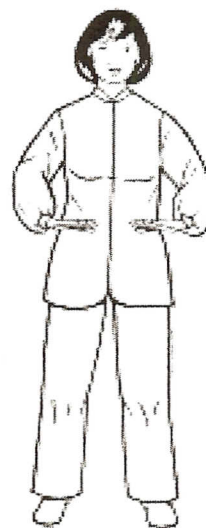


- a. _____
Roll your shoulders gently
backwards three times

Shoulder 2



- a. _____
Inhale and move your arms
upwards above your head.

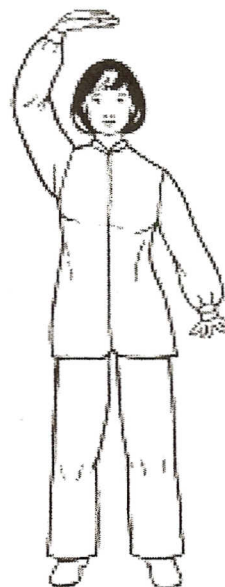


- b. _____
As you exhale, gently press
your hands down to below
your navel.

Spine 1



a.
Hold your hands in front of you as though you're carrying a large beach ball. Inhale.



b.
Exhale, push one hand up and push your other hand down, imagine stretching your spine gently. Then change hands.

Spine 2



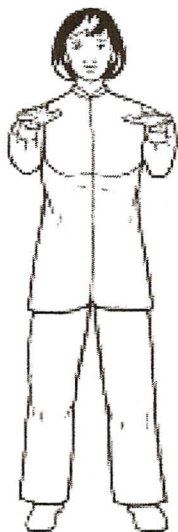
a.
Hold your hands in front of you as though you're carrying a large beach ball. Inhale.



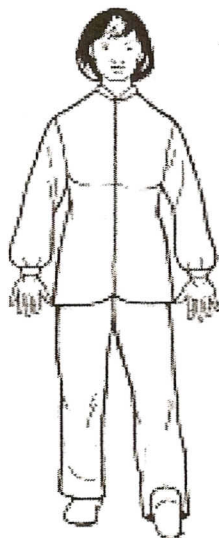
b.
Exhale, with your knees slightly bent, turn your body to the left. Then change hands and turn to the right.

WARM-UP EXERCISES

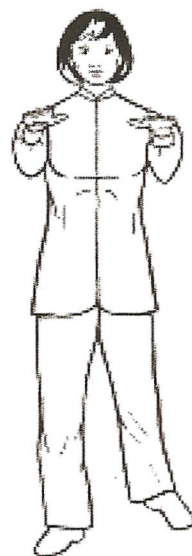
Hip 1



a.
Stand with your hands up
in front of your chest.

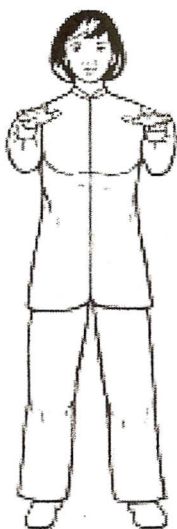


b.
Bend your knees slightly,
placing your left heel out
in front of you; push both
hands back.



c.
Step backward with your
left foot resting on the
toes, stretching your hands
forward.

Hip 2



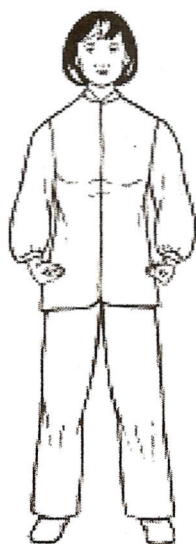
a.
Start in preparatory posi-
tion (hands in front of
chest).



b.
Bending your knees slightly,
push your hands to the left
as if you are pushing against
a wall and stretch the oppo-
site foot sideways. Then
change to the other side.

WARM-UP EXERCISES

Knee 1

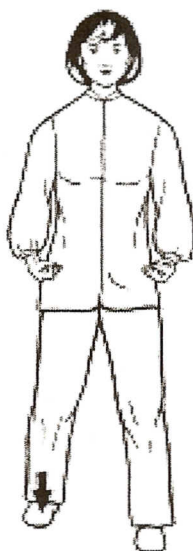


- a.
Make loose fists. Bend your knees slightly.

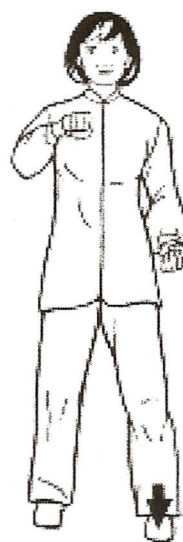


- b.
Stretch out one foot slowly and gently. Punch out gently with the opposite fist. Bring your arm and leg back and repeat on the other side.

Knee 2



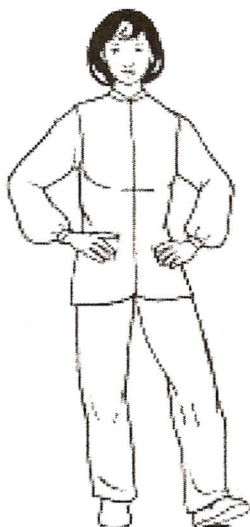
- a.
With your fists next to your hips, bend your knees slightly and step forward with one foot.



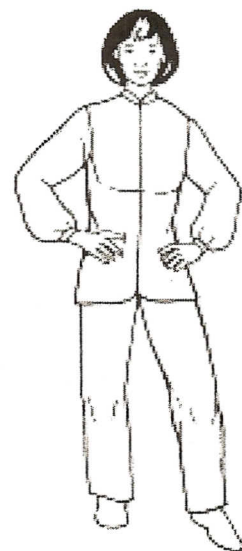
- b.
Shift your weight onto the front leg, and as your body moves forward, punch out with the opposite fist. Bring your foot back and repeat on the other side.

WARM-UP EXERCISES

Ankle 1

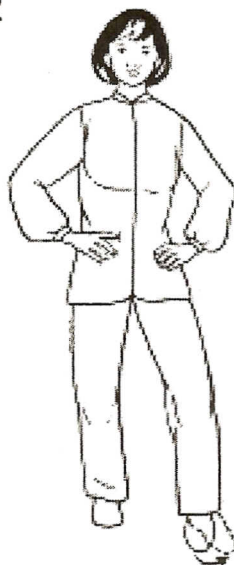


a.
Gently tap floor with your heels.



b.
Gently tap floor with your toes.

Ankle 2



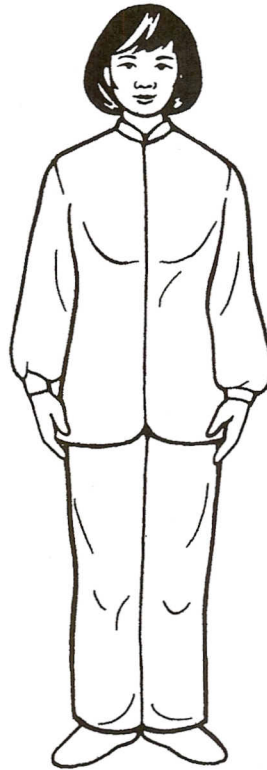
a.
Lift up the heel on one foot, point the toes down and gently rotate your foot in one direction three times, and then in the other direction three times.



b.
An easier alternative: Turn your foot inwards and outwards several times, not putting any weight on the turning foot. Change feet.

THE 6 BASIC MOVEMENTS

All positions represented as mirror image.



Starting Position

Stand with your body upright but relaxed: feet slightly apart, knees loose, eyes looking forward, chin tucked in, shoulders relaxed. Cleanse your mind.

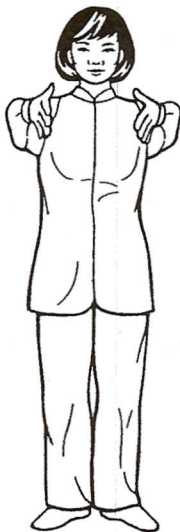
Tai Chi for Arthritis Part I

- 1/ COMMENCEMENT
- 2/ OPEN & CLOSE
- 3/ SINGLE WHIP – RIGHT
- 4/ WAVE HANDS – RIGHT 3X
- 5/ OPEN & CLOSE
- 6/ SINGLE WHIP – LEFT
- 7/ WAVE HANDS – LEFT 3X
- 8/ OPEN & CLOSE
- 9/ BRUSH KNEE – LEFT
- 10/ PLAY THE LUTE – LEFT
- 11/ PARRY & PUNCH
- 12/ BLOCK & CLOSE
- 13/ CARRY TIGER/PUSH MTN
- 14/ OPEN & CLOSE
- 15/ BRUSH KNEE – RIGHT
- 16/ PLAY THE LUTE – RIGHT
- 17/ PARRY & PUNCH
- 18/ BLOCK & CLOSE
- 19/ CARRY TIGER/PUSH MTN
- 20/ OPEN & CLOSE
- 21/ CLOSING FORM (Omit if going to Part II)

THE 6 BASIC MOVEMENTS

All positions represented as mirror image.

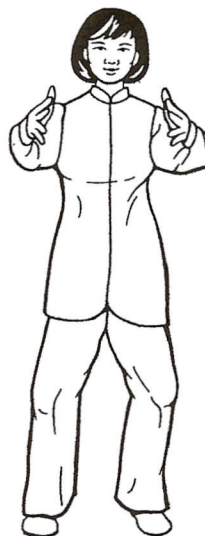
1. Commencing Movement



a.
Breathing in, lift
both arms to the
front.



b.
Breathing out,
lower the arms,
bringing the
hands to below
the waist. Bend
the knees slightly.



c.
Lift the arms,
(elbows bent).
Step forward
with left heel.



d.
Pushing hands
forward, bring
the right foot in
line with the
left foot.

THE 6 BASIC MOVEMENTS

All positions represented as mirror image.

2. Opening and Closing Hands



a.
Bring hands in
to front of chest.
(hands should
be about head
width apart)

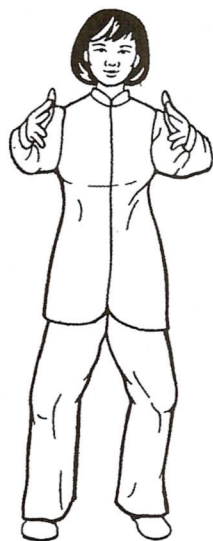


b.
Breathe in, open
hands.
(hands should
be about shoul-
der width apart).



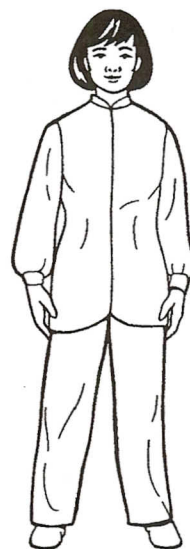
c.
Breathing out,
push hands in
toward each
other.
(hands should
be about head
width apart)

QIGONG EXERCISES



e.

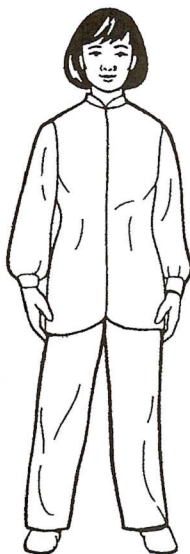
- Continue opening and closing the hands several times, starting with three repeats (for six weeks) increasing to six and then nine times.
- Complete the exercise by stretching the hands forward.



f.

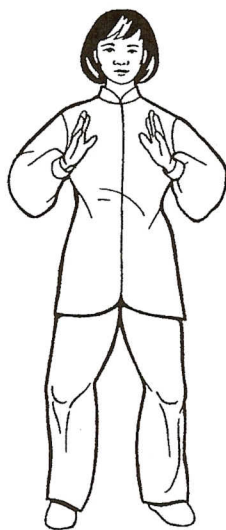
- Return to the original position, lowering the arms and straightening the knees.

QIGONG EXERCISES



a.

- Stand with your body upright but relaxed.
- Feet slightly apart, knees relaxed, eyes looking forward, chin tucked in and shoulders relaxed.
- Cleanse your mind.



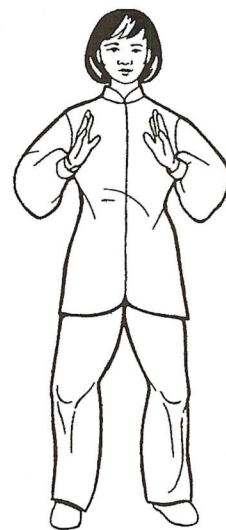
b.

- Bending the knees, bring the hands to the front of the chest (hands should be about head width apart).



c.

- Breathing in, open the hands, air travelling gently through your nose and windpipe and filling your lungs and abdomen.
- Imagine a gentle magnetic force between your palms (hands should be about shoulder width apart).

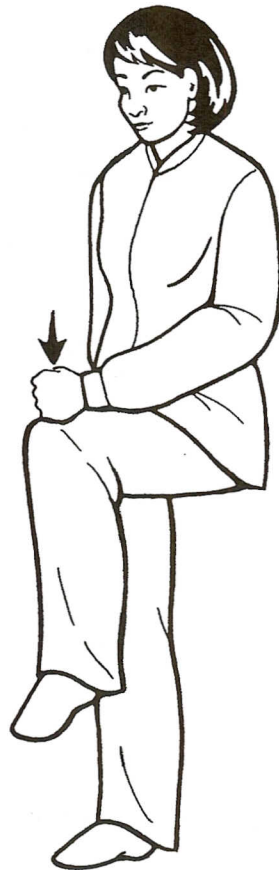


d.

- Breathing out, push the hands toward each other, air being expelled from the abdomen and lungs, through the windpipe and nose.
- Imagine pushing against gentle resistance.
- Gently straighten your knees if necessary (hands should be about head width apart).

COOL DOWN EXERCISES

Punching thighs

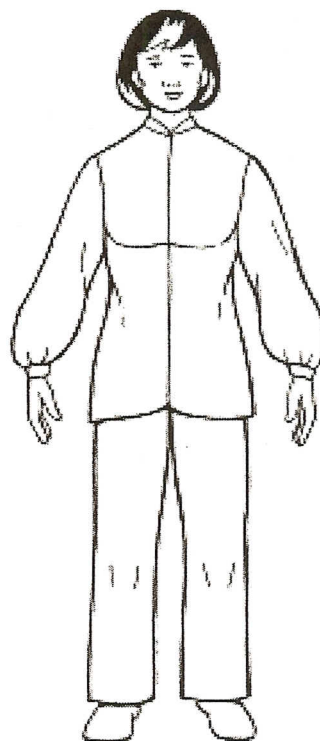


- a.
Lift your thigh
to a comfort-
able height and
gently punch it.

Tense & Relax



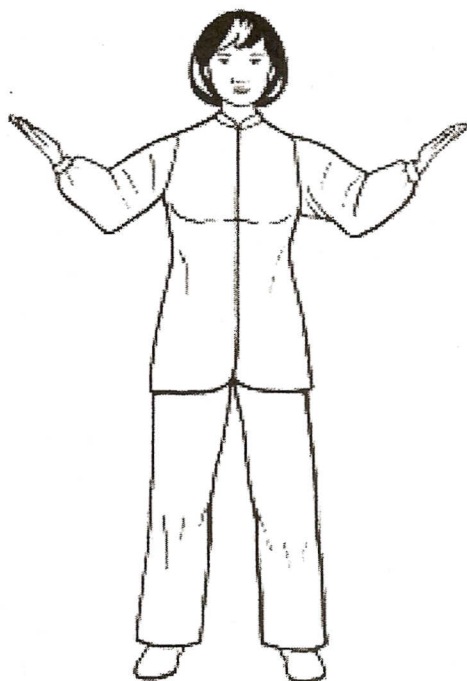
a.
Inhale, clench your hands, gently contact the muscles of your body, and stand on your toes if you can.



b.
Exhale, letting everything go and relax.

COOL DOWN EXERCISES

Raise hands



a.
Inhale and move your hands
upwards above your head



b.
As you exhale, gently press your
hands down to below your navel.