

# WORLD

## Tai Chi helps reduce arthritis pain: study

The Chinese exercise regimen Tai Chi helps reduce fatigue and arthritis pain, a new study has found.

"Our study shows that there are significant benefits of the Tai Chi course for individuals with all types of arthritis, including fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis," said Leigh Callahan, the study's lead author and associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine.

"We found this in both rural and urban settings across a southeastern state and a northeastern state," she added.

The scientists used in the study 354 participants recruited from 20 locations in the US states of North Carolina and New Jersey.

The patients were divided in two groups. One group received the eight-week, twice-weekly Tai Chi course immediately, while the other group received it later.

Participants had to have any type of arthritis, be 18 or older and be able to move independently without assistance. They were eligible for the study regardless of whether they could perform Tai Chi standing or seated, Callahan said.

At the end of eight weeks, the individuals who had received the Tai Chi course first showed moderate improvements in pain, fatigue and stiffness.

They also had an increased sense of well-being, and they had improved reach or balance, Callahan said.

The results of the study were formally presented yesterday at the annual scientific meeting of the American College of Rheumatology in Atlanta, Georgia.