

CHINESE *QI GONG* EXERCISES FOR HEALTH AND LONGEVITY

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***Qi Gong* Exercises Follow Basic Principles:**

1. Stay relaxed. Keep joints open. Tendons and fascia hold the posture, not muscles.
2. Posture erect: ears over shoulders, shoulders over hips, hips slightly tucked forward, knees slightly bent, weight evenly distributed on balls of feet and heels.
3. When possible, arch spine on inhale, rock hips slightly forwards on exhale.
4. Tongue on roof of mouth. Breathe through your nose.
5. Breath light, thin, and invisible: no sound, no volume.
6. The mind leads the *qi*; the mind leads the breath.
7. Place your mind in the area of energy, whether it's the *dantian*, other chakras or the channels.
8. *Qi Gong* requires mind and *qi* to merge. If your mind wanders, the empowerment is lost. Give your mind a focused task by counting respirations to nine, and repeating.
9. Observe (look and listen) the inside and outside of the body equally.
10. Merge exterior and interior. Inside becomes light and empty as the outside becomes heavy like water, until both interior and exterior are equal. Like a water balloon inside water, a *qi* balloon inside a sea of *qi*.
11. The mind creates the quality of *qi*. Warm, gaseous, bright, whitish-yellow, like the quality of the sun. In the *Taijiquan* form: as smoke, steel or taffy. *Qi* can be shaped by the mind into water or fire.
12. The mind leads the *qi*. The mind leads the breath. *Qi Gong* requires mind and *qi* to be as one.

QI GONG EXERCISES

The following exercises form the 40 minute program that I practice and teach. They are based on 32 years of training with various *qi gong* masters and my own experience. Collectively they develop the body and *qi* for health, martial application and spiritual clarity. Feel free to pick and choose.

Beginning Posture: Feet together, hands at thighs. Ears over shoulders, shoulders over hips, weight evenly distributed on balls of feet and heels. All exercises (after Heavenly Water), tongue on roof of mouth, above and behind teeth.

No sound or volume to the breath.

The mind leads the *qi*.

The mind leads the breath.

Qi Gong requires mind and *qi* to be as one.

1. JOINT OPENING EXERCISES

Purpose: To open all the joints, sequentially from top to bottom, so that *qi* can move through unobstructed or unconstricted channels. Prevents arthritis.

a. Neck exercises.

1. Rotate head side to side, 3-5 x
2. Chin down, roll hips forward, inhale; chin up, arch spine, exhale, 3-5 x
3. Small circle with top of head, 3 x each way

b. Shoulder exercises.

1. Hands at side, raise arms to side and above head; touch back of hands together, 3-5 x
2. Back stroke, pulling arms high above head, hands opposed, 5 x
3. Front stroke, pulling arms high above head, hands opposed, 5 x
4. Roll shoulders forwards and backwards, 5 x each
5. Arms extended at sides, turn palms one up one down. Look at the one that is up. Turn from the *dantian*. Turn and look at the other hand. Repeat 3-5 x
6. Hands touch back to back, raise in front on inhale; behind head, exhale; 5 x

c. Wrist and hand exercises.

1. Push out palms to the side, parallel with the ground, pull back fingers; rotate to outside then to inside as if turning a doorknob with your palms; 3 x
2. Push out palms in front of you, pull back fingers; rotate as above. Make circles with the fingertips to the outside, then to the inside, 3 x
3. Pull fingers into claw towards chest, push out, 3 x
4. Flap hands down and up, 5 x

d. Waist exercises.

1. Rotate waist in a circle, knees locked, head held stationary, 5 x each side
2. Rock hips back and forth, knees bent, 5 x

e. Knee and ankle exercises.

1. Feet and knees together, rotate knees 3 x in each direction, each a little lower. Then reverse, each circle a little higher, 3 x
2. Heels together, toes out, hands to inner knees. Squat, rotating knees to outside, 5 x
Reverse, hands to outer knees. Squat, rotating knees to inside, 5 x
3. Balance on one foot, rotate knee, 3 x each direction; repeat on other leg.
4. Balance on one foot, rotate toe-ankle, 5 x each direction; repeat on other leg.
5. Rock foot up and down, 5 x; repeat on other leg.

f. Spine exercises.

1. Palms together, place behind head. Arch. Forward spinal roll, one vertebrae at a time, hands pushing head downwards, relaxing spine. Push head into knees. Rise one vertebrae at a time from the bottom. Repeat 3 x.
2. Raise hands to sky, bring around to hips. Bend backwards, hands on hips, 1 x
3. Pull crown-point high, rotate on pole twisting to left, twisting to right. 2 x
4. Arch spine, close left eye, turn head to look over left shoulder, then twist hips so that you are torqued, looking at right heel. Come back to center and relax. Repeat the other side: arch, close right eye, look over right shoulder, torque and twist hips to look at left heel. Come back to center and repeat both sides.

5. Sideways bend, arm over head. Pull upper arm to left, push hips to right. Do to other side. Repeat 2 x

g. Rotate Rock.

1. Bend forward, grasp rock, rotate behind head as hips go forwards, and around to front.
Repeat 2 x, each direction

2. *YI JIN JING* –

Tendon-Marrow Condensing Breathing with Linkage

Purpose: To condense *qi* into the fascia and marrow, and to strengthen the fascia to support the structure, instead of the musculature. Condensing into the bone marrow creates vibrant red and white blood cells.

On **inhale**, condense *qi* from skin, through fascia, and into bone marrow.

On **exhale**, *qi* goes from bone marrow, through fascia, to skin.

Five line breathing: Spine (skull to coccyx), arms, legs.

Linkage: when moving, connect *dantian* through fascia to palms (*laogong*) and balls of feet (*yongquan*).

All postures, 3-5 respirations.

1. Horse stance, Inhale, hands above head. Inhale, squat, palms towards body. Exhale, slightly rise, turn palms to outside.
2. Hands to side, shoulder height. Palms out, fingers forward.
3. Rotate arms, “Throw off the overcoat”, 3 times.
4. Squat, palms up, fingers towards each other. Rotate to left, rotate to right, as if supporting table top on hands.

5. Squat. Bend forwards so that hands and arms reach between legs.
 Inhale: Reach between legs, “pull sled”, and rotate from *dantian* while squatting.
 Straighten back without rising.
 Exhale: Bend forwards, “push sled” back between legs. Stay in squat.

6. Link fingers, touch thumbs and pinkies.
 Inhale: Palms out, raise hands in front of torso and then above head
 Rise on balls of feet.
 Exhale: Palms push pole into ground.

7. Fingers linked, push palms out as you squat on exhale.
 On inhale, slightly rise.

8. Fisherman, R & L:
 Feet crossed, and together.
 Arch back, one arm raised, one arm behind back.
 Pivoting at *dantian*, bend and touch toe.
 Rise, arching back.

9. Diagonal Fisherman, R & L:
 Weight on back left leg. Right thumb at armpit, left thumb faces right elbow.
 Rotate and bend, so that elbow touches knee, and extended fingers touch toe.
 Repeat 3-5 times, and then do on other side.

10. Archer, R & L
 Arrow and bow stance, weight forward.
 Inhale: Shift weight, rotate waist to side, draw hand to chest.
 Exhale: Shift to forwards leg, rotate waist to front, bring hand around.

11. Step forwards to cross hands. Inhale, circle arms and hands overhead. rising on toes.
 Exhale, circle hands down.

3. MACROCOSMIC ORBIT (Large Circulation, *Da Zhou Tian*)

Purpose: Opens all 12 acupuncture channels, three at a time, in their natural direction.

Inhale-exhale along three acupuncture channels at a time.

a) Inhale through bottom of feet, inside of legs, to sternum (chest), along the three leg *yin* channels.

b) Exhale from sternum down inside of arms to palms, along the three arm *yin* channels.

c) Inhale fingers, outside of arm, shoulders, back and sides of neck to top of head, along the three arm *yang* channels.

d) Exhale top of head, back and sides of back, hips, legs and out feet into ground, along the three leg *yang* channels.

Heavenly Water

Rotate the tongue 12 x in each direction out side of the teeth.

Rotate the tongue 12 x in each direction behind the teeth, teeth closed.

Energize the saliva with your mind. Swallow in three parts with microcosmic orbit.

4. MICROCOSMIC ORBIT, (Small Circulation, *Xiao Zhou Tian*)

Purpose: Moves *qi* along the Du Mai and Ren Mai. The Du Mai is the largest reservoir of *yang* energy, the Du of *yin* energy. The Microcosmic orbit runs *yang* energy down the *yin* channel, and *yin* energy up the *yang* channel, thereby replenishing and invigorating those channels.

a) Inhale up the midline of the back (*Du Mai*) over top of head to eyebrows (*Yintang*).

b) Exhale from eyebrows down midline of front (*Ren Mai*) to perineum.

Repeat this orbit for 9 respirations, up to three rounds.

Variation:

FIGURE EIGHT MICROCOSMIC ORBIT

- a) **Inhale** up inside of legs to coccyx (Ren 1, (*Huiyin*) then up midline of back (*Du Mai*) over top of head to eyebrows (*Yintang*).
- b) **Exhale** from eyebrows down midline of front to anus then to outside of hips (at GB 30) and down the outside of the legs. Repeat this orbit for 9 respirations, up to three rounds.

5. MERIDIAN SEQUENCE *QI GONG*

Purpose: A variation of Four Limb Macrocosmic Orbit. Consult an acupuncture book for correct location of each channel/meridian.

Opens channels in proper direction and sequence. Three rounds will restore *qi* to health, and can be used when fighting illness, or to correct/prevent jet lag.

<i>Inhale</i>	<i>Exhale</i>
Dantian to axilla	Lung channel
Large intestine channel	Stomach channel
Spleen channel	Heart channel
Small Intestine channel	Urinary Bladder channel
Kidney channel	Pericardium channel
Triple Burner channel	Gallbladder channel
Liver channel	(Lung channel)

Inhale from the *dantian* to heart and up to below the clavicle (collar bone).

Exhale from the collar-bone to thumb along the **Lung Meridian**.

Inhale from the index finger to nose, along the **Large Intestine meridian**.

Exhale from the nose and eyes to nipple, hips, outside of knees to second toe, along the **Stomach meridian**.

Inhale from the big toe, inner leg to armpit along the **Spleen meridian**.

Exhale from the armpit to pinky finger along the **Heart channel**.

Inhale from the pinky finger up outside of arm, elbow, shoulder to the side of the ear, along the **Small Intestine meridian**.

Exhale from the inside of eye up over the top of the head down along side of spine, back of leg, side of foot, along the **Bladder meridian**.

Inhale from the bottom of foot up the inside of the calf, along side of midline to clavicle, along the **Kidney meridian**.

Exhale from the armpit along inside of arm to mid finger, along the **Pericardium meridian**.

Inhale from the ring finger up the outside of the arm to the outside of the ear along the **Triple Burner meridian**.

Exhale from the side of the ear along the side of the head and down the side of the body and foot to the fourth toe, along the **Gallbladder meridian**.

Inhale from the second toe up the inside of the leg to the top of the rib cage at the clavicle, along the **Liver meridian**.

Repeat, exhale down along the **Lung meridian**.

One cycle does all 12 meridians in 6 respirations. Do for 3 cycles.

6. **DANTIAN NATURAL BREATHING**

Purpose: Fills interior with *qi*. Equalizes interior and exterior, so that interior becomes light, and the exterior becomes heavy, until they are the same. Like a water balloon inside water, a *qi* balloon inside a sea of *qi*.

The *dantian* is a sphere lying between the umbilicus (Ren 8), *mingmen* (Du 4) and *huiyin* (Ren 1)

a) PALMS NATURAL BREATHING

Thumbs in umbilicus touching, pinky fingers touching

Left palm down, right palm covering (men)

Right palm down, left palm covering (women)

Inhale, feel abdomen push against palms

Exhale, palms gently push abdomen in

b) ARMS NATURAL BREATHING

Palms over *dantian*.

Inhale allowing *dantian* to expand the body. Palms move away from naval. Whole body expands from *dantian*. Every crevice-crease opens on inhale. Fill body with *qi*.

Exhale, sink *qi* from the *dantian* to bottom of feet. Palms push *qi* back into naval

7. REVERSE BREATHING

(DANTIAN CONDENSING BREATHING)

Purpose: Strengthens and empowers *qi* by condensing into ball in *dantian*.

Develops *wei gong*, the ability to extend *qi* from the body. This is useful in healing, and in martial applications as part of *fa jing*.

The *dantian* is a sphere lying between the umbilicus (Ren 8), *mingmen* (Du 4) and *huiyin* (Ren 1)

A) PALMS REVERSE BREATHING

Thumbs in umbilicus touching, pinky fingers touching

Left palm down, right palm covering (men)

Right palm down, left palm covering (women)

Inhale, use palms to push in abdomen, rock hips forward

Exhale, abdomen pushes against palms, hips arch back

b) SIX GATE REVERSE BREATHING

Inhale through feet and palms to *dantian*, contracting lower abdomen and contracting perineum (area between anus and testicles/vagina). On inhale, pull palms towards chest, palms up. Hips rock forward. Energy moves from 6 gates to *dantian*. Six gates: *laogong* - palms, *yongquan* - soles of feet, *baihui* (Du 20), *huiyin* (Ren 1)

Exhale from *dantian* to feet and palms. Relax lower abdomen and perineum, allowing energy to move back to palms and feet. Exhale pushing hands away from chest, palms forwards. Hips rock back. Energy moves from *dantian* to 6 gates. Repeat for 1-3 rounds of 9 respirations.

Variation: On inhale, store into Kidneys and Eight Extraordinary Channels.

8. SAN BAO SI MEN - THREE JEWELS, FOUR GATES (FUSION OF THE THREE JEWELS)

a) **Inhale** up a central shaft (*chong mai*) from perineum (*huiyin*) to top of head (*baihui*).

b) **Exhale** out the “three jewels” (the third eye, heart and lower *dantian*) and four gates (palms and soles). Imagine the central shaft to be a strong bright *qi*. Extend this river of *qi* out the palms and soles. Fuse laser energy from 3 jewels in front of you.

Purpose:

Allows us to move between *taiji* and *wuji*. The inhale, from the central shaft, reinforces our connection to the *taiji*, the physical world. When you exhale, and extend *qi* out the 3 jewels, 4 gates, you cut through the *taiji* to the other side, the *wuji*.

9. BRINGING HEAVEN TO EARTH

a) **Inhale.** Raise hands upwards along the sides of the body. Pull *yin* earth energy up along the outer *yang* channels.

b) **Exhale** Push palms down in front of body, pushing *yang* energy downwards through the center of the body.

Repeat 3 to 9 times.

Purpose: To bring *yin* earth energy up through the outer *yang* channels, and to bring *yang* energy down through the *yin* channels. Also as a conclusion *qi gong*.

10. *SAN BAO LIU MEN* - THREE JEWELS, SIX GATES (CENTRAL SHAFT BREATHING)

Posture: Taiji posture, hands at sides of hips, thumbs behind, arms round making a circle.

a) Inhale up a central shaft (*chong mai*) from perineum (*huiyin*) to top of head (*baihui*).

b) Exhale out the “three jewels” (the third eye, heart and lower *dantian*) and six gates (palms, soles), *baihui*, *huiyin*).

Purpose: This is a conclusion *qi gong*, the final expression of the practice. It opens all gates and centers, allowing the highest form of *qi* to breathe in and out of the body.

11. CONCLUSION: FACE AND LIMB MASSAGE WITH LONGEVITY EXERCISES

Rub hands

1. Massage face up and down
2. Massage scalp with fingertips, using pressure, from front to back.
3. Rub sides of ears
4. Rub ear flaps between fingers
5. Rub ear flaps back and forth.
5. Flick back of ears with fingers

Rub hands

6. Rub across forehead. Turn head into it.
7. Rub across eyes from bridge of nose to hairline

Rub hands

8. Rub along sides of nose
9. Rub across mouth
10. Rub above and below lips. Change fingers.

Rub hands

11. Heel of palms around neck to chest
12. Clench and release teeth 18 times.

13. Bone suture exercises: open on inhale, close on exhale:
 - a) Nasal- maxillary, and glabella
 - b) Coronal
 - c) Squamous
 - d) Lambdoid
14. Eye Exercises:
 - a) Massage eye muscles:
 - 1) Look up, massage from below
 - 2) Look down, massage from above
 - 3) Look right, massage from the left
 - 4) Look left, massage from the right
 - b) Massage eye points: above, below, sides
 - c) Massage 3 fingers across eyes , from bridge to hairline
15. Ear exercises:
 - a) Pinkly fingers into ear, pull and release
 - b) Close ear flap (tragus), with index finger, tap with third finger, 18 x.
 - c) Close ear with palm, tap on occiput (Heavenly Drum)
16. Rub beneath collar bone (clavicle) with fingers, then pound with fists
17. Rub to sides of ribs (Sp 21) with fists
18. Twist and pound below collar bone and opposite back of kidney
(Lu 1 and Bl 23)
19. Fist pound kidney
20. Fist pound *Dantian* and abdomen
21. Rub down inside of arms, up outside of arms
22. Rub outside of legs, up inside of legs
23. Shake out limbs

MISCELLANEOUS *QI GONG* EXERCISES

12. INTERNAL ORGAN *QI GONG*

Purpose: Use for cleansing, nurturing, rejuvenating the internal organs.

Use mind to circulate light inside organ. Go in following sequence:

1. Liver and gallbladder
2. Heart
3. Spleen and pancreas
4. Lung, right and left
5. Kidneys, right and left
6. Urinary bladder
7. Ovaries, uterus, cervix, vagina / testicles, prostate, scrotum, penis
8. Concentrate into coccyx and sacrum
9. Squeeze energy into vertebrae and spinal cord, working up from lumbar, to thoracic to cervical vertebrae
10. Circulate energy around inside of skull, extend to eyes, inner ear and sinuses
11. Bring energy into mouth and teeth, and do Heavenly Water, swallowing once.
 - a) Heavenly Water:
 1. Circle tongue outside of teeth, 9 x each direction. Create saliva; do not swallow
 2. Circle tongue inside of mouth, 9 x each direction. Create saliva; do not swallow
 3. Swish saliva back and forth, energize with light
12. Circulate and spiral saliva and energy down esophagus
13. Stomach
14. Small intestine
15. Ascending colon and appendix
16. Transverse colon
17. Descending colon
18. Exhale out rectum
19. Inhale rectum to *dantian*, and exhale out rectum. Repeat 3 times.

13. EIGHT EXTRAORDINARY CHANNEL *QI GONG*

Imagine the *Wei Mai* and *Qiao Mai* to be like a blanket wrapped around the body.

Inhale up the *Yin Wei Mai* and **exhale** down the *Yang Wei Mai*.

Inhale up the *Yin Qiao Mai* and **exhale** down the *Yang Qiao Mai*.

Inhale up the *Du Mai* and **exhale** down the *Ren Mai*.

Inhale up the *Chong Mai* and **exhale** down the *Chong Mai*.

Inhale from front to back along the *Dai Mai*. **Exhale** from the back to the front along the *Dai Mai*.

JAKE PAUL FRATKIN – BIOGRAPHY

JAKE PAUL FRATKIN has been a practitioner of *qi gong* since 1974, and Yang family *Taijiquan* since 1975. In 1987-1988, he lived in Beijing, China where he studied *Yi Jin Jing* with Dr. Duan Sheng-Ru, and medical *qi gong* with Dr. Li Guang-Jun. He has taught *qi gong* and *taijiquan* continuously since 1978 in the United States and Europe. His *taiji* emphasizes equal study of structure, martial application and internal *qi gong*. At the University of Wisconsin, he studied classical Chinese language and philosophy.

As a Doctor of Oriental Medicine, Jake practices in Boulder, Colorado, where he specializes in internal medicine, infectious disease and pediatrics. He is the author of *Chinese Herbal Patent Medicines, The Clinical Desk Reference* (2001), and recipient of *Acupuncturist of the Year* from the American Association of Oriental Medicine (AAOM), 1999 and *Teacher of the Year* from the American Association of Teachers of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AATAOM), 2006. Jake lives in Boulder, Colorado.

THE NATURE OF QI, YIN AND YANG AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO QI GONG

1. *Qi* can be translated as “life energy”. It gives life to all things, and to the ancient Chinese, it was the underlying reality of all physical things. The physical world is one of *qi* vibration, alternating between *yin* and *yang* energies, producing all physical things.

2. *Yin* energy comes upwards from the earth. It is moist and cooling. It moves upwards through the *yin* channels and the *Ren Mai*. *Yang* energy comes down from the sun and sky. It is warm and invigorating. It runs downwards through the *yang* channels and the *Du Mai*. When the two energies mix, it makes life possible. This is why life exists on our planet, but not others in our solar system. Earth has the perfect balance of *yin* and *yang* energies.

3. The *taiji* is best known as the *yin-yang* symbol. It represents the interaction of *yin* and *yang* energies, and by extension, the physical world. Literally, “*ta*” means “great”, and “*ji*” means “ridge line”, or “cross beam” in a house. It is best translated as *The Great Polarity*. The *taiji* represents the separation of *yin* and *yang*, as well as its interaction and merging. It creates the physical world. By comparison, beyond the *taiji* is the *wuji*. *Wu* means “none” or “no”. *Wuji* means “no ridge line”, no separation of *yin* and *yang*. It is best translated as “*The Non-Polarity*”. It is the reality beyond the physical world, the reality that lies on the other side.

3. *Qi gong* literally means “energy work”, “energy exercises” or “working the energy”. There are hundreds of *qi gong* exercises. The purpose of these exercises is to purify, strengthen and circulate the *qi* within our bodies, for health, longevity and spiritual clarity.

4. All health problems, whether due to illness, injury or aging, involve poor quality of *qi* and blood, or obstruction or stagnation of circulation of *qi* and blood. *Qi gong*

exercises correct or prevent this. When *qi* and blood circulate in the channels in an unobstructed way, and when the *qi* and blood is of a good quality, one is healthy.

5. *Qi gong* exercises can be organized into several types, depending on their overall effect. One type concentrates on improving the quality and circulation of *qi* within the channels. These may move *qi* in the natural direction of the channels, or work against the natural order by bringing *yin* energy to *yang* channels or *yang* energy to *yin* channels.
6. Another type works with the quality of *qi* within the body as a whole, and not dependent on the channels. For example, condensing exercises bring *qi* from the skin, through the fascia, and into the bone marrow. This strengthens the fascia, and invigorates the bone marrow to produce healthy blood cells. “Iron shirt *qi gong*” strengthens the fascia so as to make the body strong within martial arts.
7. A third type concentrates on various chakras. The three most important chakras are the lower *dantian*, the middle *dantian* (the heart chakra) and the upper *dantian* (the third eye). The lower *dantian* strengthens the physical body, and provides a reservoir of *qi* and *jing* for health. The middle *dantian* opens the heart to spiritual experience. The upper *dantian* strengthens the mind, and allows the mind to manipulate the *qi*. Working with them together, one can move between the *taiji* and the *wuji*, to increase spiritual clarity, or to access, purify and store *qi* deep into the body.
8. The strength and power of the *qi* is accumulated through practice with focused concentration. There is no end to the degree of purification and refinement that is possible. Daily practice strengthens and circulates the *qi*, strengthens the fascia-structure, improves the health of the internal organs, and improves the quality of the blood. Collectively, *qi gong* promotes immune function, vitality, longevity and spiritual clarity.