



# Qigong

## and the Ageless Woman

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**The Chinese have studied** ways of creating and maintaining healthful longevity for thousands of years. One of "the jewels" coming out of this quest for everlasting youth is the gentle, life enhancing exercise practice of Qigong (pronounced chee-GUNG). Commonly known as "Chinese Yoga" and "Feng Shui for the body," Qigong is an ancient form of Chinese medicine exercise that "retards the aging process" by cultivating and strengthening the vital energy (Qi) in the body. It is an easy to perform exercise practiced to self-create medicine naturally within the body. It is suitable exercise for people of all ages and physical abilities, especially older people and those recovering from illness or injury.

Qigong is a key to healthful longevity because it balances emotions, promotes serenity and strengthens the body. Practiced for simply twenty minutes on a regular basis, it tones not only the body but also the mind and spirit. A typical Qigong workout includes stretching and strengthening exercises, breath work, creative visualization, self-massage, vocalization of sounds and meditation through movement and stillness.

Practice of this ancient art of self-healing and fitness is often likened to "giving your self acupuncture" because it opens the flow of Qi, releases Qi blockages within the energy pathways (meridians) and promotes blood flow. This is nourishing, protecting and balancing to the body because it provides ample vital energy and blood to nourish the physical structures of the body creating sustenance and maintenance for life. The results are youthful skin, eyes and hair is maintained, sexual vitality is enhanced, bones are fortified, muscles and tendons are flexible, hormones are stimulated, energy is plentiful, mind is clear and spirit is sparked.

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Qigong can be practiced anywhere by anyone and is especially helpful to women who desire to be ageless. In ancient China prior to 500 B.C. and the dynasties led by kings, it is believed that it was the mature women shamans who created the art of Qi cultivation through their magical powers. The ideogram for women, "wu", is even thought to originally mean "to heal." As modern women, we too can benefit from the healing power of Qi to keep ourselves healthy, vibrant and beautiful for as long as we live.

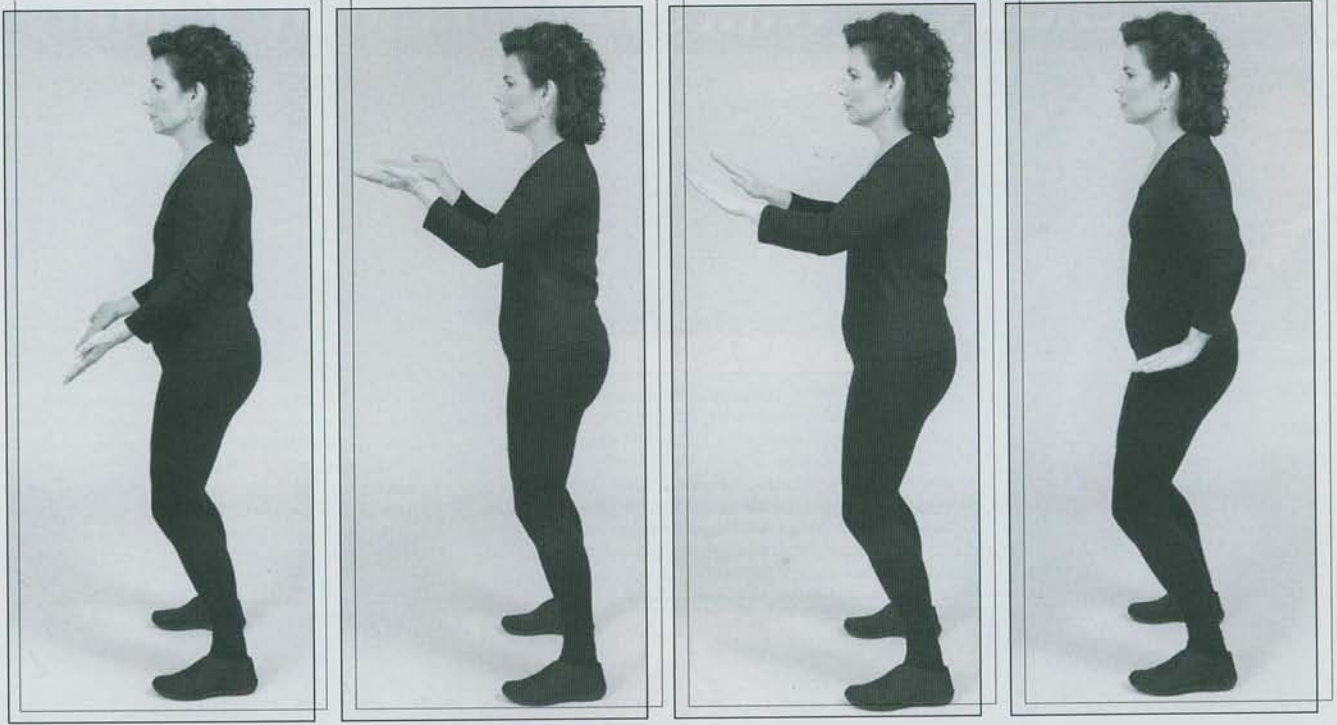
According to Chinese Medicine, good health occurs when there is a balance maintained between the two opposing, yet intimately related and attracting energies of Yin and Yang. Each person is made up of a predominance of either Yin or Yang energy.

However, women tend to be more Yin, whereas men tend to be more Yang. This is because women tend to be more cold, soft, deep, wet, internal and contracting which are Yin qualities, whereas men tend to be more hot, hard, superficial, dry, external and expanding which are Yang qualities. Qigong practice cre-

ates a healing process, where the goal is to move more toward the center of the Yin Yang continuum, so that there is no longer a preponderance of Yin or Yang creating imbalance within the system.

The relative balance between these Yin and Yang energies also "waxes and wanes" depending on various factors such as the energetic of foods eaten, weather conditions, temperature and dampness of one's dwelling, emotional state, and hereditary factors. For example, ingesting cold, wet food creates more Yin, whereas hot, dry foods create more Yang.

Women can enhance themselves and become ageless through the practice of Qigong as it creates body warmth without too much heat and adequate blood flow to counteract the tendency toward dryness. In practical terms, this explains how Qigong practice maintains healthy skin, nails and hair. Qigong practice also



reduces hot flashes, insomnia, depression, pain, anxiety and diminishing vital fluids that so often accompany a woman's life changes.

Qigong helps women to cope emotionally through nourishing the spirit as it promotes "feeling up" and provides the energy necessary to be creative, achieve goals, and manifest dreams and aspirations. Practice of these empowering exercises, helps women to speak their mind freely and express themselves in a loving, gentle way that others can accept and honor.

The ultimate goal in Chinese Medicine is to return to one's true self, to nourish one's destiny. And this is done through searching for your true self throughout life through virtuous deeds. A good first step toward this is to be quiet with yourself on a daily basis through these simple, gentle exercises. Get back to the basic, true nature of peacefulness and oneness within ourselves. Calm down, release tension, and open the flow of energy throughout your body. Look deep within yourself and realize what the bottom line of importance is for you. Connect with yourself and find that inner peace and wisdom.

Creating and cultivating wonderful, nurturing relationships in life is also of utmost importance, especially for promot-

ing a healthy flow of heart energy. The heart energy must be nourished in order to be able to receive and give love to your self and others. By creating a harmonious working of your heart through these simple life-enhancing exercises, spiritual and mental strength can be claimed in life. Life begins to flow, just like the

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Qigong is a key to becoming an ageless, happy and healthy woman that looks and feels younger. It softens

women and helps them to go inward and draw from their natural feminine power. Yet, at the same time it creates an internal strength that helps them to be heard and accepted in a clear and centered manner.

Women deserve to enjoy the pleasure that comes with connecting with themselves through the gentle, healing art of Qigong. It counteracts the tendency to retreat and provides a new zest for life as time moves forward. Give yourself this glowing gift of Qigong so that you may truly enjoy this and many future years of looking gorgeous on the outside filled with "vibrant and juicy Qi" on the inside.

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