

## New cancer study finds benefit in old therapy

Cancer patients who used a 5000-year-old combination of gentle exercise and meditation experienced significantly higher wellbeing levels, improved cognitive functioning and less inflammation compared to a control group, new University of Sydney research has found.



An important part of traditional Chinese medicine, Qigong uses physical activity and meditation to harmonise the body, mind and spirit.

Dr Byeongsang Oh, a clinical senior lecturer at the [Sydney Medical School](#) who led the study, said the reduced inflammation in patients who practised medical Qigong, a form of traditional Chinese medicine, was particularly significant.

### Significant improvements; better sex life

"Several studies have indicated chronic inflammation is associated with cancer incidence, progression, and even survival," says Dr Oh, who will present his findings to the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) conference in Chicago this week.

"Patients who practised medical Qigong experienced significant improvements in quality of life, including greater physical, functional, social and emotional wellbeing, and enhanced cognitive functioning, while the control group deteriorated in all of these areas," Dr Oh says.

He also found the patients in the medical Qigong group reported increased satisfaction with their sex lives.

The study involved 162 patients, with those assigned to the medical Qigong group undertaking a ten-week program of two supervised 90-minute sessions per week. They were also encouraged to practise at home every day for at least half an hour.

### Study believed to be a first

The mean age of participants in this study was 60, with ages ranging from 31 to 86 years. The most common primary cancer diagnosis among participants was breast cancer (34%) followed by colorectal cancer (12%).

When the study began there were no significant differences in measurements of quality of life, fatigue, mood status and inflammation between the intervention and control groups.

"To our knowledge, our study is the first statistically significant, randomised controlled trial to measure the

impact of medical Qigong in patients with cancer," Dr Oh says.

Source: Sydney Medical School

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