

Tai Chi brings benefits for people with dementia

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Bournemouth University research has found that Tai Chi brings positive

health benefits to older people with dementia.

The TACIT Trial looked at the benefits that Tai Chi can bring for people with [dementia](#), specifically looking at whether Tai Chi could prevent falls and improve quality of life.

Dr. Samuel Nyman, a Principal Academic at Bournemouth University, led the study and said, "We were really interested to see if Tai Chi improves balance and prevents falls among people with dementia. This is an important issue because people with dementia are twice as likely to fall, and twice as likely to have injuries as a result of falls."

The research took a [control group](#), who carried out normal activities, and measured them alongside a group of a similar make up who all undertook a six month Tai Chi programme.

The research, published in Clinical Interventions in Aging found that those who had followed a programme of Tai Chi maintained a good quality of life, whereas those in the control group had a decline in life quality over the same period.

Dr. Nyman continues, "We found that those who did Tai Chi really enjoyed the classes and meeting up with others who have dementia and their family carers. We found Tai Chi to be an incredibly safe and gentle exercise, and family carers were happy to support their loved ones with the classes and home practice. Although we found no improvements in scores on balance tests, there was a strong trend for those in the Tai Chi group to have fewer falls."

The study was carried out across the South of England, with Tai Chi sessions in Dorset, Southampton and Portsmouth.

There are plans to continue the research with a larger study that will seek

to prove through more data that Tai Chi does prevent falls, specifically in people with dementia. It will also seek to understand how exactly Tai Chi does reduce falls.

More information: Samuel R Nyman et al.

Randomised Controlled Trial Of The Effect Of Tai Chi On Postural Balance Of People With Dementia

, *Clinical Interventions in Aging* (2019). [DOI: 10.2147/CIA.S228931](https://doi.org/10.2147/CIA.S228931)

Provided by Bournemouth University

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