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# QI GONG



SHARP CORONADO HOSPITAL  
HEALTHY LIVING CENTER

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## Qigong : Health benefit

Qigong is an ancient Chinese practice that can have many health benefits, including:

- **Physical health:** Qigong can help with muscle strength, cardiovascular and respiratory fitness, and circulation. It can also help with chronic pain, balance and walking ability
- **Mental health:** Qigong can help with stress, anxiety, and depression. It can also help with mental function and improve sleep. Qigong's controlled breathing activates the parasympathetic nervous system.
- **Immune system:** Qigong can improve immune function
- **Chronic fatigue:** Qigong can help with chronic fatigue syndrome, which can cause extreme tiredness.
- **Rejuvenation:** Qigong can help people regain vitality and maintain health into old age.

Qigong is a mind-body practice that involves breathing techniques, body postures, guided imagery, and meditation. The practice is based on the idea that qi, or life force, flows through the body, and that restoring balance to the body can improve health.

**Key points for practicing Qigong: Do not force the stretch and stop if you feel any sharp pain. Maintain a neutral spine throughout the movement to avoid strain.**



## **The Baduanjin qigong (八段錦): 8 Brocades qigong**

### **1. TWO HANDS HOLD UP THE HEAVENS**

The first movement, two hands hold up the heavens, open the Sanjiao meridian. This move is stretching and opening the spine and stimulating the circulation through the Sanjiao meridian.

To practice the movement:

1. Take a deep breath and exhale.
2. Then start with your hands turned inwards at the waistline, legs shoulder-width apart with knees gently bent.
3. Slowly straighten your legs and stretch your hands toward the sky. Remember to take long slow breaths in and out.

### **2. DRAWING THE BOW TO SHOOT THE HAWK**

This movement is the second movement. This exercise helps to strengthen the core and legs so you can stand strong. It is also focused on strengthening the muscles in the upper

back and shoulders by opening the chest and promoting a balanced flow of qi through the upper body.

To practice the movement:

1. Start with your legs shoulder-width apart with knees gently bent and remember to keep your back straight.
2. Draw your hand in the shape of a bow at shoulder level. Pretend to pull the invisible string hard like you are shooting a bow at a target.
3. Then reverse the position. Remember to take long slow breaths in and out and keep your gaze forward towards the shooting hand.

### 3. SEPARATING HEAVEN AND EARTH

The third movement, separating heaven and earth, brings balance to the stomach and spleen meridian. It gently loosens stiff muscles in the front of the body, as well, by strengthening the tendons and muscles aiding with the process of digestion. This exercise can help relax your body, open the spleen and stomach meridian.

To practice the movement:

1. Start with your legs shoulder-width apart and remember to keep your back straight.
2. Begin by making a fist, bend the elbows, and turn your fists inward until they touch.
3. Pull the fist up with resistance like you are lifting a weight.
4. Then separate the arms slowly, as you draw one arm up to the sky and the other to the earth, without shoulder tension. Look down to “earth” side of hand. Reverse the movement for balance.

#### 4. THE WISE OWL GAZES BACKWARD

The fourth movement, the wise owl gazes backward, boosts energy and reduces stiff sore muscles, especially those along the spine. This exercise helps to reduce muscle stiffness and soreness.

To practice the movement:

1. Start with your legs shoulder-width apart and your hands loosely hung with your palms facing down.
2. Make sure your hips and buttocks are tucked in.
3. Open your arms slowly with your elbows to your hips and your palms facing forward.
4. At the same time, twist your head slowly to one side. Inhale when rotating and gazing backwards, exhale when returning. Reverse the movement for balance.

#### 5. PUNCHING WITH AN ANGRY GAZE

The 5th movement, punching with an angry gaze is beneficial to harmonize and regulate mental state. The movements open the liver meridian, which is associated with anger. It's an excellent exercise for stress and tension that shows up in the body. This exercise promotes the flow of the qi for more balanced physical, mental, and emotional state. Practice punching the air slowly to release tension emotionally and physically.

To practice the movement:

1. Step with feet shoulder-width apart.
2. A clenched fist, extending the arm forward as you gently bend your knees.
3. Inhale and bring your fist back, elbow bent, pushing slightly past your back.
4. Then switch for balance.

#### 6. THE BIG BEAR TURNS SIDE TO SIDE

The sixth movement, the big bear turns side to side, helps optimize the flow of energy throughout the body and balance. The movement mimics the motion of a large bear turning its body from side to side, with a deep twisting motion of the torso while maintaining a stable stance. It regulates lungs, heart, and loosens muscles & joints of the hips.

To practice this exercise:

1. Step with feet shoulder-width apart and hands on your hips.
2. Take deep breaths in and out as your body side to side

## 7. TOUCHING TOES THEN BENDING BACKWARD

The seventh movement, touching toes then bending backward, promotes stimulating the vital organs while effectively stretching the hamstrings and lower back muscles. Practicing this exercise helps to stimulate the flow of energy in your body and to loosen the muscles and joints in the back of your legs, hips, rib cage area, upper back, and neck.

To practice this exercise:

1. Stand with your feet at shoulder-width apart.
2. Place your palms on your lower back and gently lean backward.
3. Lift your chest upward. Exhale.
4. Slide your hands slowly down the back of your legs and bring your hands forward, to the front of your feet. Slide up your hands in front of your legs, the side of your hips and the side of torsos towards the sky.

## 8. BOUNCING ON THE TOE

The eighth movement, bouncing on the toes, promotes boosting the immune system. It is also useful in increasing the energy flow in the body and strengthening your calf muscles. Try this exercise to strengthen your calf muscles. Runners and gymnasts often do this type of exercise.

To practice this exercise:

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Inhale and slowly rise onto the balls of your feet until you are almost standing on the tip of your toes. Hold it a second.

3. As you exhale, slowly drop your heels

