

Marion VA Health Care System

Qigong Guide



Figure 1- yin yang symbol

What is Qigong?

Qigong is a blend of active and dynamic movements, breathing, visualization and meditation for the purpose of cultivating health in the body. “Qi or Chi” generally means life energy and “Gong or Kung” means merit or achievement or cultivation.

Intention in Qigong:

1. Regulation of qi flow
2. Emphasis on humility and effortless action- Qigong is practiced at 2/3 effort when healthy and 1/3 effort when recovering from illness or injury



Qigong Video Resources

Joint Warmup-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8nogq3iQP4>

5 Elements Form

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52TbsnKIwV0>

8 Brocades Form-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3K-0JpiJu-o>

5 Elements Organ Mudra Meditation-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2HECgsUfbwQ>

Metal Element Practice- fall

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3tGMS6_AySs

Water Element Practice- winter

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpxvNKewxHU>

Wood Element Practice- spring

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdSTlr1k4Aw>

Fire Element Practice- summer

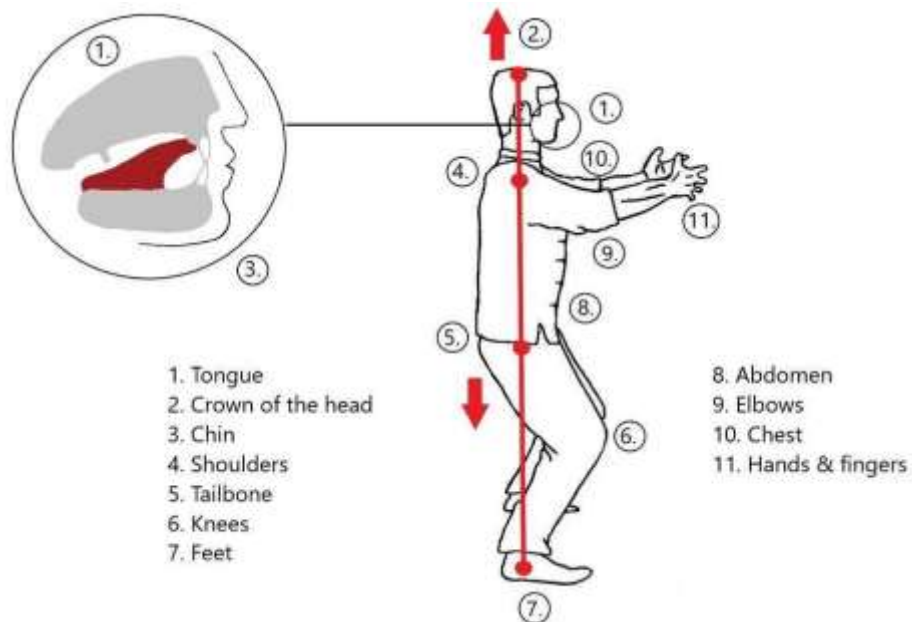
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RdUmD1Kp798>

Earth Element Practice- late summer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qMEjVsVx8M>

Wuji Position

1. Head:
 - a. Crown of head (baihui point) should be lifted.
 - b. Chin should be tucked gently down
 - c. Tip of tongue should touch roof of mouth just behind teeth
 - d. Lips are gently closed
 - e. Eyes follow the leading arm or leg
2. Torso- Centered and naturally upright
 - a. Chest should be relaxed and slightly concave, allowing upper back to round slightly
 - b. Belly button (dantian) should be slightly pulled in, allowing the lower back to round slightly to keep mingmen point (gate of life) open
 - c. Waist and hips should be loose and relaxed
3. Arms/shoulders
 - a. Shoulders should be relaxed and sink down
 - b. Armpits should be “open”
 - c. Elbows should always keep some bend. When arms are extended forward or to side, elbows should stay low
 - d. Hands (in taiji)- wrists are flexed, fingers are extended
4. Legs/feet
 - a. Knees should maintain some bend
 - b. Feet should have even weight distribution from ball to heel



Traditional Chinese Medicine

In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) the organs are connected to pathways called meridians, which move qi through the body. It is believed that the qi can become blocked, stagnant, erratic, sluggish, excessive or deficient due to lifestyle, trauma, injury, or stress. These blockages result in pain, discomfort, illness, and disease conditions. TCM unblocks qi so it can flow freely.

5 pillars of TCM:

1. **Qigong**- offered by the VA
2. Acupuncture- offered by the VA
3. Herbal Medicine
4. Tuina Massage
5. Feng Shui

Balance- Yin & Yang

TCM seeks to find balance in the body and in life. Yin and Yang represent opposing and interdependent forces. In the Yin/Yang never exist completely independently. One is never only yin or only yang.

Yin= female, dark, still, cool

Yang= male, light, active, warm

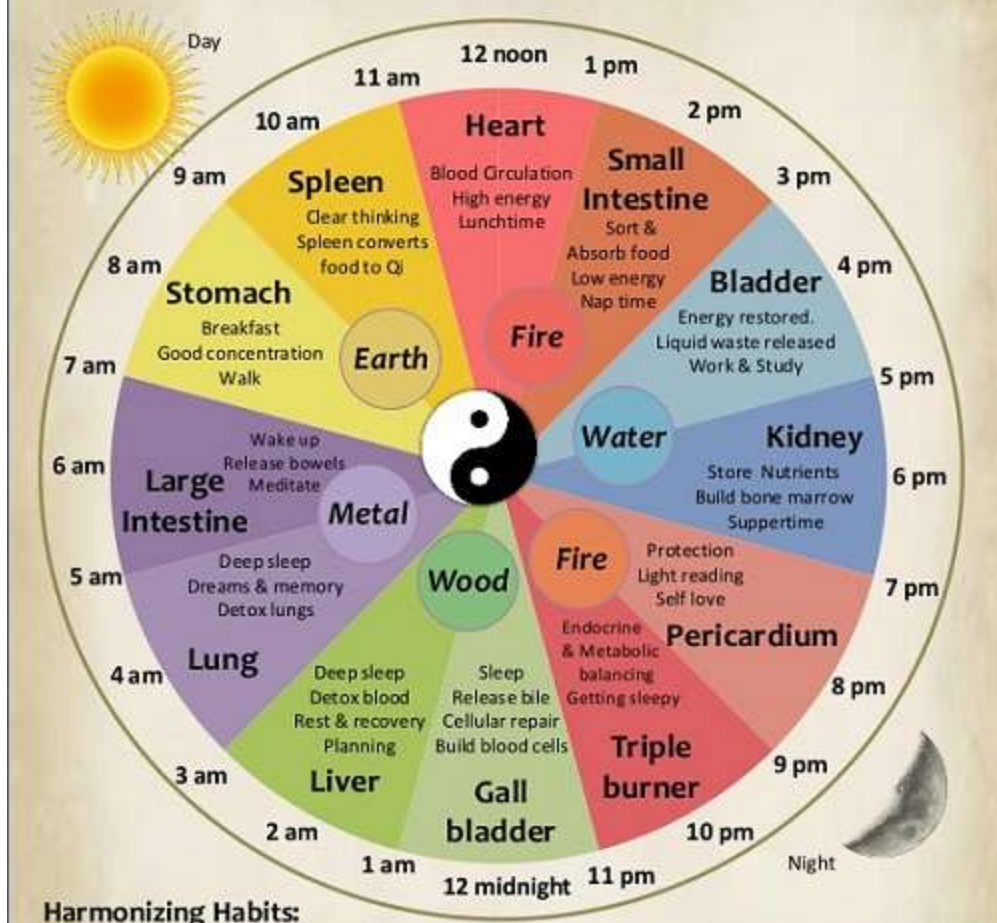


Lifestyle According to TCM

It is recommended to follow the natural circadian rhythm.

Sleep video- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-ZFpjxCqw>

Chinese Medicine 24-Hour Circadian Clock



5-7: Wake/Morning routine
7-9: Breakfast, Walk
9-11: Work
11-1: Lunch, Fitness
1-3: Quiet/easy work or nap
3-5: Work

5-7: Dinner, Socialize
7-9: Relax
9-11: Self-care/Sleep routine
Sleep- aim for 8 hours of sleep, starting between 9-11pm, and waking between 5-7am.

5 Elements Qigong Group (45min)

Group Description:

This group includes a joint and meridian warm-up and a classic form focusing on the physical self. Forms include the 8 Brocades, 18 Forms, Muscle Tendon Changing Classics, 5 Animal Frolics, and the 5 Elements form. This is a balanced practice that incorporates all 5 elements in each form.

This is a great group for **improving overall balance and range of motion. It is a good alternative to yoga for those with mobility restrictions.**

Qigong requirements:

Plan on wearing comfortable clothing and non-slip shoes.

Instructor:

Jasmine Cave, MPA, MEd, CTRS



Balanced Elements (July-August)

Classic Form: 5 Elements (standing or seated)

- 5 Element Metal
- 5 Element Water
- 5 Element Wood
- 5 Element Fire
- 5 Element Earth

Ascending Yin (September-November)

Form- 8 Brocades or Baduanjin

- Two Hands Support the Heavens for the Triple Heater (fire)
- Raise the Hands to Condition the Stomach and Spleen (earth)
- Opening the Bow to let the Arrow Fly (wood)
- Nod the Head and Wag the Tail to Calm Heartfire (fire)
- Looking Back to Eliminate the 5 Fatigues and 7 illnesses or Wise Owl Turns its Head (earth)
- 2 Hands Climb the Legs to Strengthen the Kidneys (water)
- Punching With an Angry Face (wood)
- Shake the Back 7 Times to Eliminate the Hundred Illnesses (metal)

Maximum Yin (December-February)

Form: 18 Forms or Shibashi

- | | |
|---|---|
| Pulsing/Harmonizing the Qi (wood) | Moving Clouds/Cloud Hands (water) |
| Opening the Chest/Heart (fire) | Touch the Sea, Look at the Sky (metal) |
| Separating Clouds (fire) | Flying Pigeon Spreads its Wings (metal) |
| Rainbow Dance/Paint the Rainbow (earth) | Pushing Waves (water) |
| Rolling Ball/Repulse Monkey (wood) | Wild Goose Flying (metal) |
| Rowing the Boat in the Center/Heart of the Lake (water) | Punching with an Angry Gaze to Increase Strength (wood) |
| Lifting Ball (fire) | Turning the Flying Wheel (water) |
| Looking at the Moon (earth) | Bouncing Ball (earth) |
| Turning the Waist and Pushing the Palms (earth) | Peaceful Qi |

Ascending Yang (March-April)

Form: Muscle Tendon Changing Classic or Yi Jing Jing

Wei Tuo Presents the Pestle #1, #2, #3

Transforming a Plucked Star into the Big Dipper

Turning 9 Cows Around by their Tails

Extending Claws and Exhibiting Wings

9 Ghosts Drawing Swords

3 Plates Falling Down

The Azure Dragon Displays its Claws

Tiger Pouncing on its Prey

Bowing Down

Swinging the Tail

Maximum Yang (May-June)

Form: 5 Animal Frolics

Monkey (earth)

- Monkey Takes Earth Qi
- Monkey Offers Fruit

Tiger (metal)

- White Tiger Breathing Qi
- White Tiger Climbing to the Top of the Mountain

Bear (water)

- Bear Turns
- Bear Pushes Down with 2 Hands
- Bear turns and pushes down

Deer (wood)

- Male Deer
- Female Deer/Deer runs

Crane (fire)

- Crane breath
- Flying Crane
- Red-Headed Crane Delights in Seeing its Mate

Qigong for Relaxation (30min)

Group Description:

This group uses Traditional Chinese Medicine principles for relaxation and general wellness. Each session includes a gentle movement and visualization practice.

This is a great group for **improving overall health and wellness. This group can be done seated.**

Qigong group requirements:

Plan on wearing comfortable clothing and non-slip shoes or barefoot as desired. If you want to do this practice seated, make sure you have a chair that will remain stable as you change positions.

Instructor:

Jasmine Cave, MPA, MEd, CTRS



Metal Element (September-November)

Fall is a time to slow down and see the true value and importance of life. It is also a good time to let go of things we no longer need.

Qualities of the Metal Element

Organs: Lungs & Large Intestine

Emotion: Grief/Holding on

Challenged by: Perfection/The Past

Responds to: Respect, acknowledgement

Out of Balance: Harsh, cutting, self-righteous. A tendency to cling to ideas or loss. Irregular bowel movements, restricted breathing, skin disorders, fatigue, weak immunity.

In Balance: Integrity, dignity, courage. Open to new ideas and transformation. Healthy Boundaries and immune system.

Class Sequence

Organ Polishing Meditation

Microcosmic Orbit

Opening and Closing the Gates

White Tiger Breathing Qi

White Tiger Climbing to the Top of the Mountain

Flying Pigeon Spreads its Wings

Wild Goose Flying

Five Element Metal

Touch the Sea, Look at the Sky

Shake the Back 7 Times to Eliminate the Hundred Illnesses

Holding the Moon to the Chest

Hands Breathing Lungs

Hands Help with Letting Go

Closing Form for Peaceful Qi

Water Element (December-February)

Winter is a time to relax and rest. It is a time of recovery before the start of a busy spring. This is a time to embrace wuwei or action/non-action with the soft strength of water.

Qualities of the Water Element

Organs: Kidneys/Bladder

Emotion: Fear/Willfulness

Challenged by: The Unknown/Fear of the Future

Responds to: Stillness, reassurance, peace

Out of Balance: Willful, fearful, stagnate, unable to flow with life's experience, lack of compassion/connection to others. Can be isolated and suspicious of others or overly driven with an unrealistic expectation of life. Common disorders include reproductive issues, brittle bones and teeth, ear disorders, dizziness, insomnia, and lower back pain.

In Balance: Inner strength, endurance, perseverance, deep knowing, and wisdom. A sense of belonging and connection to ancestry, and creative with balanced energy.

Class Sequence

Arm Swings for Health

Moving Clouds

Pushing Waves

Rippling Waves Water Mudra

Embryonic breathing

Three Stars of the Dantian

Bear Turns

Bear Pushes Down with Two Hands

Turning the Flying Wheel

Five Element Water Practice

Rowing the Boat to the Center/Heart of the Lake

Two Hands Climb the Legs to Strengthen the Kidneys

Closing Form for Peaceful Qi

Wood Element (March-April)

Spring is a time for growth and creation after the rest/recovery of winter. It is also a good time to focus on personal or professional development.

Qualities of the Wood Element

Organs: Liver, Gall Bladder

Emotion: Anger/Resentment

Challenged by: Authority, restrictions

Responds to: Rhythm, having a plan, clear vision, dreams and goals

Out of Balance: Unstable, unclear, misdirected growth, too many projects/plans.

Inappropriate anger- either too much/volatile or too little/meek/no boundaries.

Problems with vision, muscle weakness, weak tendons/ligaments, weak fingernails.

In Balance: Personal/professional growth. Resourceful with clear vision of the future. Toned muscles, strong fingernails, and healthy tendons/ligaments.

Class Sequence

Standing Qigong Posture or Emptiness Stance (wuji)

Embrace Tree, Embracing the One

Horse Stance

Joint Opening

Pulsing/Harmonizing the Qi

Rolling Ball

Five Element Wood

Opening the Bow to Let the Arrow Fly

Male Deer

Female Deer

Punching with an Angry Gaze to Increase Strength

Qigong Spiraling Hands Mudra

Closing Form for Peaceful Qi

Fire Element (May-June)

Summer maximizes the growth and creation of spring. It is a good time to enrich personal relationships and focus on what makes you happy or fulfilled.

Qualities of the Fire Element

Organs: Heart, small intestine, pericardium, triple heater

Emotion: Joy

Challenged by: Boundaries, solitude

Responds to: Stimulation, excess, warmth, intimacy, love, play

Out of Balance: Easily agitated/overstimulated or too quiet/cut-off. Sleep disorders, anxiety, inability to trust self, awkward relationships with others.

In Balance: Calm, warm, tranquil. Able to care for self and others, trust your judgement, and maintain healthy relationships. Feel physically aligned with your thoughts and beliefs- you can trust your gut.

Class Sequence

Parting Clouds

Opening the Chest

Five Element Fire

Hands to Heart

Nod the Head and Wag the Tail to Calm Heart Fire

Flying Crane

Red-Headed Crane Delights in Seeing its Mate

Separating Clouds

Two Hands Support the Heavens for the Triple Heater

Heart Protection Mudra and Meditation for the Pericardium

Separation of Pure and Impure Mudra and Meditation for the Small Intestine

Lifting Ball

Flame in the Palm of the Hand Mudra Meditation

Closing Form for Peaceful Qi

Earth Element (July-August)

Late summer is a time of transition between the growth/expansion of spring and summer and the rest/recovery of fall and winter.

Qualities of the Earth Element

Organs: Spleen, stomach

Emotion: Contemplation, obsession, sympathy

Challenged by: Stagnation, obsession

Responds to: Food, security, stability, understanding

Out of Balance: Overwhelmed and ungrounded. Worrying/over-thinking/over-analyzing. Feeling uprooted or not at home in own experience. Poor circulation/cold hands and feet. Digestive problems.

In Balance: Ease, openness, grace. Able to remain balanced and centered without feeling overwhelmed when managing multiple responsibilities. Healthy/balanced body and appetite.

Class Sequence

Meditation on Visualizing Qi Move Through the Body

Monkey Takes Earth Qi

Monkey Offers Fruit

Five Element Earth

Looking Backward to Eliminate the 5 Fatigues and 7 Illnesses

Looking at the Moon

Bouncing Ball

Raise the Hands to Condition the Stomach and Spleen

Rainbow Dance

Turning the Waist and Pushing the Palms

Spleen Meditation

Shaking the Body

Earth Element Mudra-Power of the Immeasurable Gods

Closing Form for Peaceful Qi