Letter to the Editor

Effect of Tai Chi on Endothelial Function

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The interesting report by Sivasankaran *et al.*¹ that yoga has a salutary effect on endothelial function reminds me of another oriental conditioning exercise, Tai Chi, that is also associated with enhanced endothelial function.^{2,3} Wang *et al.*³ demonstrated that regular practice of Tai Chi, a Chinese conditioning exercise with slow and graceful movements (Fig. 1), is associated with enhanced endothelium-dependent dilatation in skin vasculature of older individuals. Moreover, Tai Chi may delay the age-related decline of venous compliance and hyperemic arterial response.³

Tai Chi is the Chinese ancient wisdom of an ideal exercise for both normal subjects and cardiac patients.² Besides its salutary effects on hypertension, hyperlipidemia, decreased heart rate variability, heart failure, stroke, and post-coronary artery bypass operation rehabilitation, Tai Chi also has a positive effect on the psychosocial status among people with cardiovascular disease risk factors.⁴ Statistically significant improvements in all measures of psychosocial status were found: improvement in mood state, reduction in perceived stress, increased self-efficacy to overcome barriers to Tai Chi, confidence to perform Tai Chi, and perceived social support.⁴

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FIG. 1 Author practicing Tai Chi during a recent visit to China.

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