

# Chow Medical Qigong: *A Holistic Body/Mind/Spirit Approach to Rehabilitation and Total Health*

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**By Dr. Effie Poy Yew Chow**

*“Giving individuals the power to determine and manage their own health and destinies is the secret of true healing.” -Effie Poy Yew Chow*

My book *Miracle Healing from China, Qigong*, prescribes at least eight “bear-hugs” and three “belly-aching laughs” a day. Qigong is not just another exercise or meditation form that only affect the individual. It is a way of life. Qigong affects individual and planetary health with one being interdependent on the other...influencing the climate and environment...in essence, we humans created the Tsunamis, Katrina, and Global Warming and more. We are individually responsible. This short article allows only the precocious mention of this concept for further thought and discussion. However you can begin to understand it through the basic Chinese Law of the Five Elements Theory.

All practitioners of Chinese Medicine and other health professionals should practice Qigong for their own health and stamina and for improved results in treatment for their clients/patients.

The cases below, from illness to corporate wellness, reflect the miracles, which take place daily at all levels using the Chow Integrated Healing System and Chow Medical Qigong in my everyday practice with even the most severe cases that had not responded to western or other treatments. Our rate of success is 85%. This also indicates that Qigong is not just an innocuous little gentle movement, but excitingly powerful positive thoughts, movement, and action.

**CASE #1:** Bill G. 82 years young. In one day within a few hours, he had three massive

strokes and one seizure. He was left with severe brain damage and in a coma for 10 days. In February 2003, upon recommendation of Dr. Deepak Chopra, I was invited by the son to work with his father, with full cooperation of the Indianapolis University Medical Center (with one of the top neurology divisions in the country). The following transpired.

**February 1, 2003** – Bill had 3 massive strokes and 1 seizure resulting in massive brain damage of parietal, temporal and cerebral lobes. He was comatose, had no speech, no response to light, speech, or other stimuli, and had involuntary movement of his limbs. Bill was on intra- venous and gastric feeding. He had a catheter involuntary bowel movement, atrial fibrillation, elevated temperature, and left hemiplegia. With all tests including CAT scan and MRI, the physician doubted that he would ever again walk, hear, see, talk properly or eat by mouth. They did not know whether he would come out of the coma.

**February 12, 2003** - Began Chow Medical Qigong on Bill. In the first therapy session, Bill regained full cognizance - upon request with slight assistance, he turned his head, and moved his arms and legs 6 times each. He sat in high fowler's position with eyes opened and smiling. Within 10 days of Chow Medical Qigong he made such rapid progress, Bill was walking well, eating by mouth, and went on a short visit home. He was transferred to a Nursing Rehabilitation Home. The chief of medicine in his rounds with their residents and interns made comments such as “we don't quite understand how Chow Medical Qigong therapy works, but Bill's progress is, striking, remarkable, unbelievable.

The family has always been grateful that Bill lived another four quality years. I was again called in to work with him four years later at the Reeds Hospital to help him transition well to his next life.

**CASE #2:** Hope S. 86 years young. Fibrosarcoma Grade II. 24 year survivor. Hope was 62 when she nearly died in 1981. A large un-operable cancer measuring eight inches in diameter was found. She was diagnosed with fibrosarcoma (Grade II), a form of cancer generally unresponsive to other treatments. Hope was told she was going to die; she

would be lucky if she lived two more years. Facing certain death, Hope (her real name) practiced Chow Medical Qigong diligently, which included other measures such as diet, meditation, etc. and her miracle began to happen. When she began Qigong, her abdomen was so swollen with cancer she looked six months pregnant. Over the next four months, her abdomen shrank, CAT scans showed a steady reduction in the size of the cancer, and she began to feel like life might be worth living again. Four months after beginning routines of The Chow Medical Qigong System, a CAT scan showed that the original cancer mass had disappeared, but a suspicious mass remained in the left kidney. The kidney was removed surgically, but no evidence of cancer was found. In contrast to most people who are looking for a quick fix for their health problems, she faithfully practices the Chow Qigong principles and exercises that cured her and continue to keep her healthy even now. She is well aware that she needs to do so to keep the cancer from returning. At 86, she is very active, owns and runs a lovely bed and breakfast, a small apple orchard producing apple cider and dried apples, and travels all over the world.

**CASE #3:** Bill T. 62 years young. Dystonicchorea, wheelchair dependency for 12 years. Stroke May 2002. Prognosis: never walk again. A male client from the Veteran's Administration (VA), wheelchair dependent for 12 years, a hospital administrator for 27 years, Vietnam shell shocked...(result of experimental medication), developed severe dystonicchorea symptoms since 1992, e.g. constant severe motion of arms and body. He had a brain operation May, 2002 which caused a stroke and total dependency upon the wheelchair. Two weeks before he came to the fifth World Congress on Qigong, November 2002, his doctor and physiotherapist told him he would never walk again and ordered a power wheelchair for him. Bill and his caretaker from the VA came to Chow Medical Qigong workshop at the Congress....3 minutes of Chow Medical Qigong he sat very still, free of the dystonicchorea symptoms. After 8 minutes of Chow Medical Qigong, he got up, walked, encircled me in his arms and danced around, then walked the perimeters of the large room. He also walked for the first time up the 4 steps onto the stage, after the presentation he got up and again danced me on the stage laughing heartily to whistles, cheers and tears! Then walked down the stairs to his wheelchair.

**“His helper and friend**, a veteran in Desert Storm, spontaneously reported at the same time, “I had heart surgery in 1992. They went into my back so they cut the whole left side trapezius muscle group, which is my power side. I have no strength in my left side and arm. And I have 25% nerve degeneration. After my surgery I was put on 500mgm darvoset, a pain medication...since then I had not run out. I have taken increased and stronger dosage and now I’m on Oxycontin, a time release pain medication. As a test, after I saw Dr. Chow yesterday at the workshop, I stopped taking my medication last night just to see what happens. I still haven’t taken any! I can feel that effect, but folks, when I came today I reached down automatically with my left hand to pick up my gym bag, something I trained myself not to do for a long 10 years. I have never been able to do this... (he used his left hand, picked up his heavy gym bag up high to show everyone, then dropping it, he continued to raise both arms up in the air saying that he could not do that for 10 years either) Thank you.”

**CASE #4:** A 9 month old beautiful boy child, Nathan, diagnosed as Semilobar Holoprosencephaly (Children with this diagnosis are not expected to develop much at all and most are expected to die within a year. Even if they do not die they are not expected to have much cognitive awareness, to walk, talk, or develop any form of meaningful interactions.) He was not sitting or walking or holding his head up, legs stiff and unbending, he was a potential for an inguinal operation.

... There is no need now for the operation. With ten minutes of Chow Medical Qigong, he stood briefly, opened his legs to normal movement and could hold his head up for periods of time, all for the first time in his life.....mother (in her 20’s) and grandmother cried from sheer happiness. We all were too! She reports that he is still progressing....able to better hold up his head, standing better, bending his legs well, and has also begun to sit up for a bit of time. We pray the progress and treatments will continue.

#### **CASE #5: Corporate Peak Performance**

“A great majority of our people said your presentation was the best motivational talk they’ve ever heard. Our San Francisco agency just completed its most successful campaign in our history. Thank you (Dr. Chow) for helping us find our peak

performance.” -W. Q., *C.L.U. General Manager Prudential Insurance (S.F.)*

**The Chow Integrated Healing System (The Chow System) or**

**Chow Medical Qigong** is a system’s approach that I developed over 30 years ago with much experimentation. It is a pragmatic system that combines modern Western health practices, ancient Traditional Chinese Medicine/ Qigong, and my own original concepts of a total integrated approach to health of the body, mind, and spirit along with nature. Qigong, the precursor of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is the basic underlying component of The Chow Medical Qigong System. Qigong is based on the classic Chinese theory that a powerful energy system exists in the body, and that energy (Qi) flows through known energy pathways. The pathways are referred to as channels, or meridians. The qi system is as direct as the respiratory and nervous systems. If qi patterns are disrupted by physical, emotional, or spiritual distress, environmental exposures, or any number of factors, a person becomes susceptible to disease. When this disruption of energy is rebalanced, health is restored. In this integrated approach, a person’s body, mind, and spirit are one, interacting with people, the immediate environment, and the Universe. Clients play a central role in their therapy. Fitness and preventive health are emphasized, and stress and tension often are seen as common precursors to disease. Another concept is that all true healing originates from a higher power, and that effective healing occurs only when a healer or practitioner has facilitated the flow of qi from this higher source.

**The Concepts of the Chow Integrated Healing System**, besides being based on Traditional Chinese Medicine principles, is comprised of many important components, theories, and principles. As a summary, ten of the most important basic concepts for initial practice are:

- 1 Get at least eight hugs a day, and be “in touch”
- 2 Get at least three Belly-Aching-Laugh-A-Day
- 3 Maintain a positive mental attitude
- 4 Maintain proper posture and breathe with the diaphragm (not the chest)
- 5 Meditate daily

- 6 Good nutrition, supplements, and perhaps herbs
- 7 Practice the right type of exercise – Qigong exercises
- 8 Be at peace with yourself and others
- 9 Live the qi energy concept
- 10 Give and receive lots of love

### What is Qigong?

Qigong (pronounced “chee-gung”) is a five thousand-year-old traditional form of Chinese energy exercise and healing for the body, mind, and spirit in harmony with nature. It is a system for improving and maintaining health, as well as to help cure disease. The basic aim is to bring the body into a state of balance and self-regulation. Qigong is an ancient philosophical system of harmonious integration of the human body with the Universe. It is an art and science that plays an active role in protecting and strengthening health, preventing and treating diseases, resisting premature senility, and prolonging life. Qigong has succeeded akin to a miracle where all else has failed. Ancients referred to Qigong as the method to “eliminate diseases and prolong life.”

Qigong is derived from two words. “qi” is the term used in Traditional Chinese Medicine for our vital breath, life force or energy. The concept has no direct counterpart in Western culture. It is roughly the equivalent of “Bio-energy” (living energy), or electromagnetic energy. This “living energy” is the vital life force that permeates all nature. It is the force in our bodies that controls our biochemistry and all other functions and behavior. If there is no Qi, there is no life! This concept is at the core of most every aspect of Chinese culture, including art, architecture, philosophy, sports, and science.

Gong: can mean discipline, work, or skill. Therefore, Qigong has been defined roughly as “energy work,” and “breath work.” It also has been called “air energy” because, through breathing exercises, energy is absorbed from the atmosphere.

Once a hidden practice jealously guarded by the elite spheres of classical Chinese society and later forbidden during the Cultural Revolution, Qigong today enjoys vast popularity

among the Chinese people, official support by the Chinese Ministry of Health, and intensive scrutiny by the Chinese scientific community.

Qigong is one of Traditional Chinese Medicine's (TCM) principal methods of treatment. Though there are many schools, concurrent theories are these:

- The mind, body, and spirit energies can be regulated and cultivated through the relaxation and concentration of mental and physical exercises
- Control of respiration plays a central role
- Bringing the body into a state of maximum repose and self-regulation can help realize full physical potential, resist illness, recover damage caused by diseases, and balance the body's relation with the mind.
- "Balancing the human with the sky". In traditional Chinese thought, the sky is a general term for nature. Qigong researchers maintain that the human body and nature exist as an inter-related and inseparable unity. Imbalances in this unity are a key cause of illness. Therefore, humankind should strive for the conscious awareness of our inherent coordination with nature.

Recent scientific research has begun to produce physiological evidence backing Qigong theory. For example, it has been shown that:

- Disordered or over-stimulated cells in the cerebral cortex can be returned to a relaxed state through Qigong practice
- Positive physical changes can be traced to more efficient respiration and metabolism which in turn greatly reduces energy consumption
- The body's strength is fostered and more prepared to fight off illness by Qigong because of an improved immune system
- Qigong aids the generation of saliva and gastric juices, thus improving digestion and absorption.

### **The Potential of Qigong and Scientific Research**

Qigong is a discipline anyone can learn. Many people practice Qigong simply because it makes them feel good, perform better, experience higher levels of energy and stamina,

and reach their level of optimal health. Qigong can improve sports performance, prevent jet lag, and supercharge the immune system. Qigong practice has been shown to super-oxygenate the cells of the body. It can reduce stress, improve bowel function, and relieve the symptoms of insomnia and other sleep disorders. In the area of pain control, Qigong practice can relieve acute and chronic pain, reduce the pain of childbirth, and speed recovery from sports or other injuries. In addition, Qigong can increase the effectiveness of Western medications, may reduce the side effects, and even allow the use of smaller doses.

Many scientific studies have documented that Qigong has value in the treatment of more serious problems. It can reduce healing time after surgery by 50%, normalize the blood pressure, and heal tuberculosis. It can heal gastric and duodenal ulcers, chronic atrophic gastritis (stomach inflammation), and liver disease. It can relieve nearsightedness (myopia) and improve mental performance. It also has been effective in the treatment of substance abuse, obesity, respiratory conditions, asthma, and allergies

Benefits have also been seen in a long list of serious neuromuscular conditions, such as post-stroke syndrome, paralysis from brain and spinal cord injuries, multiple sclerosis, aphasia (loss of the power of expression of speech), Parkinson's disease, and cerebral palsy.

In more than thirty research studies, Qigong has been found to reverse the effects of aging. Qigong has improved or reversed the results of many medical tests that usually become abnormal with age. In addition, it has cured many of the diseases that are common to senior citizens.

Qigong has been shown to reduce deaths related to high blood pressure, reduce the frequency of strokes, reduce the incidence of retinopathy (deterioration of the back of the eye), improve the efficiency of the pumping action of the heart, and decrease blood viscosity ("thin" the blood). It has also improved EKG (heart) and EEG (brain) readings, normalized the level of sex hormones, and improved blood sugar levels in diabetics.

The enhancements of sexual power and treatment of sexual dysfunction with Qigong has a long history. Many books have been written about the application of Qigong in impotency, frigidity, and the improvement of a normal sex life. We have treated many people successfully for impotency, other sexual dysfunctions, and for enhancing normal sexual qi.

Cancer patients usually benefit from Qigong practice. According to representatives of the Guo Lin Research Society, over one million cancer victims practice Qigong every day. Their cancers have either stopped growing, shrunk, or disappeared completely. As mentioned previously, Qigong can reduce or eliminate the side effects from chemotherapy. It also can reduce the need for pain medication, and improve the appetite and sense of well-being in patients with advanced cancer. Terminal cancer patients who practice Qigong usually die with dignity, with little or no pain, have a better quality of life, and feel comfortable right up to the end. Thus they avoid being medicated into a narcotic stupor, a sad and common fate in the West.

Though research shows that Qigong can improve health and miraculous cures have been verified, experienced Qigong masters caution it is not a “cureall.” There is one major characteristic of Qigong that sets it apart from other tales of miraculous recoveries. Healing benefits from Qigong are the result of the practice of a discipline that involves time, patience, and commitment. If people who benefit from Qigong don’t continue to practice the measures that help them, their progress may disappear and they may slip back into their previous problem. They need to practice and/or have treatment until they have built up their internal qi sufficiently to maintain that good health status.

Qigong first gained scientific validity in 1953, with the establishment of the Shanghai Qigong Research Institute. Since 1982, Qigong research has spread throughout the world. Many Traditional Chinese Medicine hospitals incorporate Qigong in their core curriculum. The National Center of Complementary and Alternative Medicine at the National Institutes of Health has conducted and encouraged research in Qigong.

However, there is still a paucity of randomized controlled scientific data available.

East West Academy of Healing Arts and Dr. Chow have sponsored, along with many co-sponsors, the ten World Congresses on Qigong, two Qigong Summits, formed the American Qigong Association (AQA), the American Medical Qigong Association (AMQA), and the World Qigong Federation (WQP). This year's meeting will be held in Japan. The overall consensus of the investigators and reviewers of current data is that there is a dire need for more sound research in all areas related to Qigong: to decipher the mechanism of Qigong for the scientific community, to demonstrate the efficacy of Qigong, to determine the appropriate type and amount of Qigong needed for health and for various medical conditions, and to assess cost effectiveness of Qigong.

Supported by the rich background of thousands of years of history and a myriad of anecdotal evidence, it will only be a matter of time before Qigong is fully integrated into the conventional regimen of health maintenance and healing. **OM**

**EFFIE POY YEW CHOW**, (PhD, RN, Dipl Ac (NCCAOM), Qigong Grandmaster) is the founder and President of the San Francisco, CA based international organization, East West Academy of Healing Arts (EWAHA) in 1973 and, more recently, the EWAHA Qigong Institute, the American Qigong Association, American Medical Qigong Association, and the World Qigong Federation. In June 2003, Dr. Chow was appointed to a 15 member national Task Force for the Chicago Museum for Science and Industry in their 21st Century Initiative for Life and Health. She believes in an integrated creative approach to health and life and prescribes at least 8 hugs and 3 bellyaching laughs a day to everyone!