

**Title of Intervention:** The Atlanta Frailty and Injuries: Cooperative Studies of Intervention Techniques (FICSIT)

**Website:** <http://www.safeaging.org/model/programs/ficsit/ficsit.asp>

**Intervention Strategies:** Group Education, Individual Education

**Purpose of the Intervention:** To improve frailty and reduce the effects of falls

**Population:** Individuals over the age of 70

**Setting:** The Wesley Woods campus, an independent living facility; community-based

**Partners:** None mentioned

**Intervention Description:**

- Group Education: Tai Chi Quan was originally developed as a martial arts form but has been used for centuries in China as an exercise for older adults. Participants in the intervention group met twice weekly for 15 weeks to learn 10 Tai Chi forms that emphasize movement components often restricted or absent with aging.
- Individual Education: Exercises were provided for 15 weekly sessions on an individual basis for participants assigned to the Balance Training group. Training consisted feedback on center-of-mass under static conditions and as the floor surface was moved, with eyes open or closed. This training allowed for information about displacement of body weight in space so that balance could be corrected.

**Theory:** Not mentioned

**Resources Required:**

- Staff/Volunteers: Exercise instructors
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Balance training interface
- Space: Rooms for group exercise classes and individual balance training sessions
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Class materials
- Evaluation: Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS), cardiovascular measurement equipment, balance measurement devices, surveys

**Evaluation:**

- Design: Case control study
- Methods and Measures:
  - Physical and mental assessments were done using cardiovascular assessments, the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) and the Affects Balance Scale
  - Surveys were done of the home environment.
  - Falls were monitored continuously throughout the study.

**Outcomes:**

- Short Term Impact: Fear of falling was reduced in the Tai Chi intervention compared with the control group. Grip strength declined in all groups. Lower extremity range of motion showed limited, but statistically significant changes in the intervention group. Lowered blood pressure before and after a 12-minute walk was seen following Tai Chi participation.
- Long Term Impact: After adjusting for fall risk factors, Tai Chi was found to significantly reduce the risk of multiple falls.

**Maintenance:** Not mentioned

**Lessons Learned:** A moderate Tai Chi intervention can have favorable effects upon the occurrence of falls. Tai Chi warrants further study as an exercise treatment to improve the health of older people.

**Citation(s):**

Wolf, S. L., H. X. Barnhart, et al. (1996). "Reducing frailty and falls in older persons: an investigation of Tai Chi and computerized balance training. Atlanta FICSIT Group.

"Frailty and Injuries: Cooperative Studies of Intervention Techniques." J Am Geriatr Soc 44(5): 489-97.

Wolf, S. L., N. G. Kutner, et al. (1993). "The Atlanta FICSIT study: two exercise interventions to reduce frailty in elders." J Am Geriatr Soc 41(3): 329-32.