

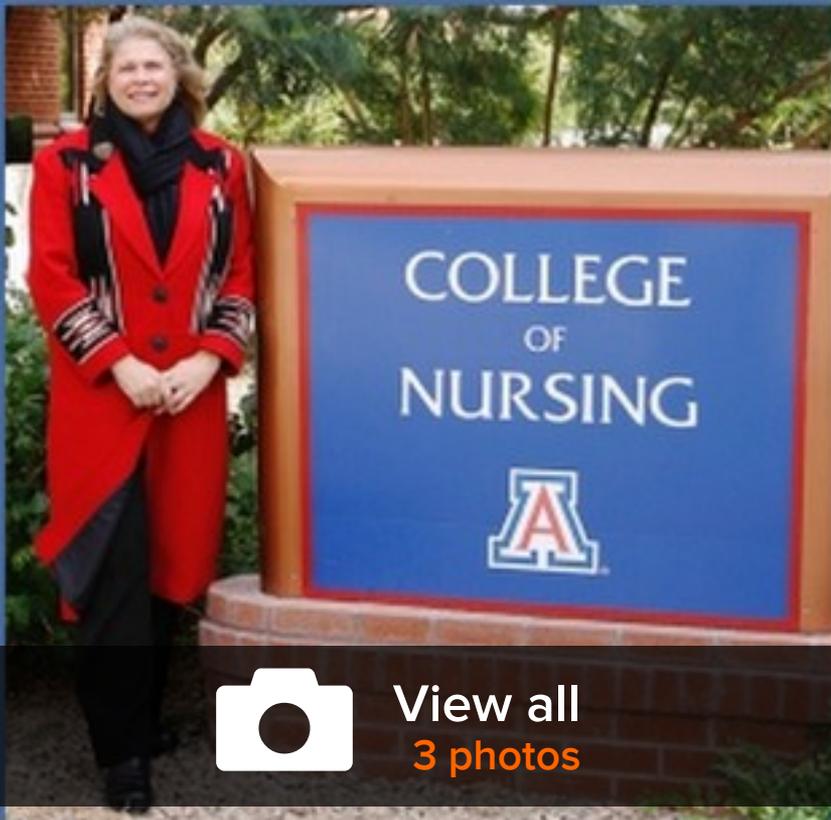
SPORTS / RECREATION / COMBAT SPORTS

The Science of Tai Chi

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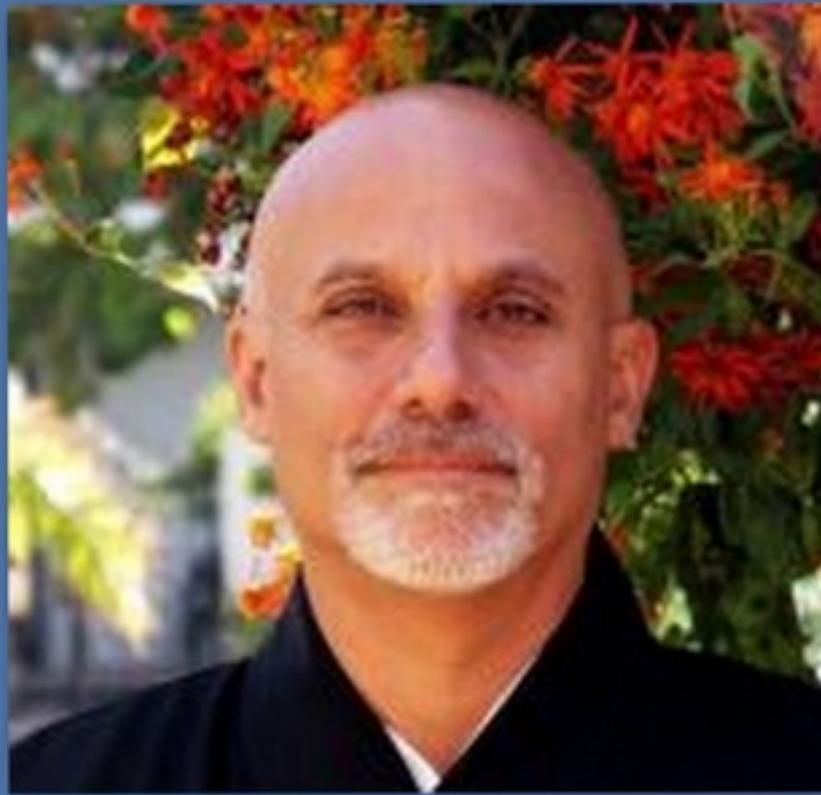
Tai Chi is a form of ancient Chinese martial art as well as a healing art. There are thousands of scientific studies conducted to validate the health benefits of practicing Tai Chi. *Harmony in Motion: The Science of Tai Chi*, a DVD produced and hosted by Master [Arthur Rosenfeld](#), is quite fascinating. It provides a clear picture of why Tai Chi works in a scientific medical perspective.



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Drs. Ruth Taylor-Piliae, Ge Wu and Shin Li.

Amir Adib/Arizona Daily Wildcat



Arthur Rosenfeld

Harmony in Motion: The Science of Tai Chi is funded by **Purdue Pharma LP**, a leading manufacturer of pain management medicines, and produced by Information Television Network of Boca Raton, Florida. It is part of a DVD series developed to inform healthcare professionals about the health benefits of integrative therapies. Medical practitioners can order a free copy of this DVD from Purdue's website(<http://www.partnersagainstpain.com/hcp/pain-management-resources/alternative-treatments.aspx>)to enhance their knowledge and help their patients for better pain management.

The physical health benefits in Tai Chi have been evident for centuries. Master Rosenfeld of Florida has been practicing Tai Chi and other **martial arts** over 30 years. He was fortunate and had the opportunity to study the secrets of Tai Chi from a few grandmasters. He possesses a profound understanding of Tai Chi. Rosenfeld is also a famous writer. His book, ***The Truth about Chronic Pain***, has been used in medical, pharmacy and nursing schools. Walter Anderson, Chairman and CEO of *Parade Magazine*, praised Arthur's novel, ***The Cutting Season***, as a gripping story and a page-turning mystery, of which he attributed partially to Arthur's in-depth medical knowledge. Combining his knowledge on Tai Chi and medicine, Master Rosenfeld's *Harmony in Motion: The Science of Tai Chi* is interesting to watch and easy to understand.

In the DVD, Rosenfeld first visits **Ge Wu**, Ph.D. and professor of the Department of Rehabilitation and Movement Science at the University of Vermont. Dr. Ge Wu's research focuses on biomechanics of human postal control system, with special interests in fall prevention and improving balance in the elderly. Rosenfeld explains how Dr. Wu conducts the research by showing her lab and the computer equipment tracking and depicting postal alignment. The research quantifies the muscle movements during Tai Chi practice. Her studies strongly suggest that Tai Chi can strengthen muscles and is good

for endurance training as well as motor control training.

At his next stop, Rosenfeld stops in to see [Ruth Taylor-Pilliae, Ph.D.](#) and professor of cardio rehab at the University of Arizona. In the cardio rehab program, heart patients are taking Tai Chi classes as part of a recovery treatment. It is very impressive to hear the patients talking about the benefits that they have obtained. Dr. Taylor-Pilliae says that in general, they have seen patients with better blood pressure, improved cholesterol values and higher glucose tolerance. Edna Silva, who is an RN and Tai Chi instructor for the program, says that other physicians also send patients to Tai Chi classes to reduce pain or lower stress level.

Tai Chi is a [Qigong](#) regimen. Practicing Tai Chi can increase the quality and quantity of Qi (vital life energy). But what is Qi? It is not an organ and it is almost intangible. At University of California – Irving, [Dr. Shin Lin](#) shows audience what Qi is and how to measure the change of Qi after Tai Chi practice. Master Rosenfeld volunteered himself to be hooked up with monitors for brain wave, blood circulation, breathing pattern and heart rate pattern. It shows that Tai Chi has an incredible effect on relaxation, which cannot be obtained through conventional exercise, i.e. running or playing tennis, according to Dr. Lin. Some in the western medicine consider Qi as energy. Dr. Lin's lab shows that with Tai Chi practice, the photon value, the heat/temperature of a practitioner's hand and electric conductance all increase substantially. Again, common exercise cannot achieve these types of results.

What make this DVD more compelling are the testimonials from a few medical physicians.

Gastroenterologist Dr. Rodney Cohen says that Tai Chi slows down the aging process for him. Clinical psychologist Dr. Cary Schwimmer integrates Tai Chi principles in his practice. Anesthesiologist Ron Weisberg mentions that practicing Tai Chi helps him pay more attention to body alignment, and now he does not have lower back pain from surgery room. He further emphasizes that Tai Chi workout does not result in mental exhaustion other sports have.

Dr. Shin Lin is a Tai Chi practitioner and disciple of [Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei](#). It is fun to watch Arthur push hands with him. Although this DVD is intended for healthcare professionals, there is also a bonus of 20-minute basic tai chi instruction by Master Rosenfeld that makes it of value to anyone interested in the art

Dr. Roth Taylor-Pilliae thinks that Tai Chi is on the cutting edge of exploding. She thinks physicians should acknowledge that Tai Chi is valuable and they should recommend it to their patients as an adjunct physical activity. You may wish to ask your doctor for a copy, and if he doesn't have one, suggest he request one from Purdue.

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Violet Li

Tai Chi Examiner