

Wu Ming Qigong for Breast Cancer Treatment and Prevention

The most powerful tool traditional Chinese medicine has to offer for breast cancer treatment and prevention is qigong (pronounced *chee-kung*), an ancient system of exercises that increases Qi (vital energy), bolsters the immune system, and unlocks the body's innate healing ability. In this section, we'll teach you a series of seven qigong exercises from a tradition known as *Wu Ming*. Each movement unblocks stagnant energy in the meridians, or energy pathways, that run through the breast area.

Practicing Qigong

- Practice the entire series of movements in the order listed at least once a day. If you have breast cancer or are undergoing chemotherapy or radiation, practice twice daily. *Wu Ming* Meridian Therapy can lessen the side effects of these treatments by helping your body expel toxins.
- Do not practice for at least half an hour after eating a meal or engaging in sexual intercourse.
- Do not practice when you are menstruating.
- Try to practice at the same time each day. The hours of 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. are the best times to build Qi.
- In addition to practicing the movements as a set, do each movement individually whenever you can, especially if you are in the later stages of breast cancer. Almost all of the movements can be done rather inconspicuously, so take advantage of every moment you can: waiting for the train, watching television, or even talking on the phone.
- Adapt the exercises to your own ability. If it is difficult for you to stand, for example, do the movements while seated. Similarly, movements that use both arms can be done with only one arm if the other is immobilized. Skip any movement that is impossible for you to do.

Preparing for Practice

Before you begin practicing, take a few deep breaths. Close your eyes and clear your mind -- let go of everything that is bothering you; just leave it all behind.

As you practice the movements, breathe naturally. These exercises require no special breathing and no visualizations. (The principle of *Wu Ming* Meridian Therapy is that no technique is the best technique.) Concentrate on each movement as you do it. If your mind starts to wander, imagine that you are drawing energy from the sun, the moon, and the stars. Imagine that this energy from the universe is filling your body and destroying all cancer and illness. Do not focus on a particular organ or body part; see your whole body becoming healthier. Most importantly, take great joy in the knowledge that you have the ability to heal yourself. The Qi you are building should be gentle, joyful, peaceful, and calm.

After you learn the mechanics of each exercise, slow each movement down. Remember that *Wu Ming* Meridian Therapy is not aerobic, nor is it designed to build muscle (although you will have more physical strength with regular practice). These are slow, gentle movements that stimulate the smooth flow of Qi through your body.

1. The Dragon Opens the Curtains

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



1. Raise your hands to your chest with your palms facing forward. Bend your knees slightly.

2. Slide your hands out to the side as far out as is comfortable without locking your arms. Keep your fingers pointing upward.

3. Slide your hands back to their previous position.

Repeat for five minutes.

Tips: This exercise should be done smoothly and slowly. Each in-and-out movement should take about two seconds. If you are unable to stand, you can do this movement while seated.

2. The Dragon Touches the Moon

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



1. Raise your hands to your chest with your palms facing forward. Bend your knees slightly.

2. Push your hands out directly in front of you. Go out as far as is comfortable without locking your arms. Keep your fingers pointing up.

3. Slide your hands back to their previous position.

Repeat for five minutes.

Tips: This exercise should be done smoothly and slowly. Each in-and-out movement should take about two seconds. If you are unable to stand, you can do this movement while seated.

3. The Dragon's Toe Dance

Step 1



1. Rest your hands on your lower back with your fingers pointing toward your spine. Shift your weight to your right leg.

Step 2



2. Lift your left leg so your toes touch the floor.

Step 3



3. Make a circle with your knee. Start by swinging your left leg outward so your knee points to the side. Keep your toes on the floor.

Step 4



4. Continue the circle so your knee is directly behind you, keeping your toes on the floor. At this point, your leg will be stretched straight behind you, your heel almost touching the floor.

Step 5



5. Continue the circle so your knee crosses in front of you.

Step 6



6. Repeat for one minute, then switch to the other leg.

Repeat for five minutes.

Tips: This exercise should be done smoothly and slowly. Each circling movement should take about two seconds.

4. The Dragon Kicks Forward

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



1. Rest your hands on your lower back with your fingers pointing toward your spine. Lift your left knee.

2. Kick forward with your heel while keeping your toes pulled back. Your heel should be a few inches from the floor when your leg is fully extended.

3. Lift your knee back to its previous position.

Repeat for five minutes, then switch to the other side.

Tips: Make sure you are actually kicking, not swinging your foot. When you kick correctly, your knee will move up and down. This exercise should be done smoothly and slowly; each kick should take about two seconds. If you have trouble keeping your balance, feel free to use a chair for support. This exercises can also be done while seated.

5. The Dragon Kicks Backward

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



1. Rest your hands on your lower back with your fingers pointing toward your spine. Lift your left knee.

2. Kick directly behind you, keeping your toes pulled back. Your toes should be a few inches from the floor when your leg is fully extended.

3. Lift your knee back to its previous position.

Repeat for five minutes, then switch to the other side.

Tips: This exercise should be done smoothly and slowly; each kick should take about two seconds. If you have trouble keeping your balance, feel free to use a chair for support.

6. The Dragon Scoops the Moon from the Ocean

Step 1



1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.

Step 2



2. Bend down at the knee and pretend you are scooping something up with your left hand.

Step 3



3. Make a scooping motion in front of your left foot.

Step 4



4. Rise slowly while looking at your palm.

Step 5



5. Continue looking at your palm as you rise.

Step 6



6. When your hand is at chest level, turn your palm face down and look forward.

Step 7



7. Slowly lower your hand back to your side.

Step 8



8. Return to the original standing position.

Step 9



9. Repeat with the other side. Continue alternating sides for five minutes.

7. The Dragon Stands Between Heaven and Earth

This last qigong exercise is an ancient meditation posture. Of all the qigong exercises, this is the most powerful. If you only have time to practice one movement, practice this one.

View 1



View 2



Begin by standing with your feet shoulder-width apart and your knees slightly bent. Raise your arms to chest level, and make two fists. Point your thumbs toward each other about six inches in front of you. You can relax your arms, but keep your hands at this height.

Now relax. Take a few deep breathes. Close your eyes, and imagine you are a dragon standing between heaven and earth. Hold this posture as long as you can.

That's all there is to it. On one hand, it is easy, because there is no movement to learn. On the other hand, it is difficult to do "nothing," to let your mind be peaceful.

When you first begin practicing, you may find it difficult to hold this posture, even for only a few minutes. In general, you should stand in this position for at least three minutes. You only begin building energy after the posture becomes difficult to hold, so push through any initial discomfort. The longer you maintain this posture, the more energy you are building. Really challenge yourself. No other exercise will do more to help you heal.

Copied from the breastcancer.com web site.

Adapted from the book *Traditional Chinese Medicine: A Woman's Guide to Healing from Breast Cancer*, by Dr. Nan Lu, O.M.D., M.S., L.Ac., with Ellen Schaplowsky. This information is for consumer educational use only. Never disregard, avoid, or delay in obtaining medical advice from your doctor or health provider because of something you have read or practiced in class. Copyright © 2003-2009 Traditional Chinese Medicine World Foundation. All rights reserved.

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