

# QiGong for Arthritis

The following qigong exercises are designed to release stagnation and move Blood to increase mobility, flexibility and circulation in joints and to moisten and nourish the tendons and cartilage. These exercises should be performed slowly and gently using your body as feedback to avoid injury. More advanced stages of arthritis will need to move very slowly with small circles until the joints are “opened” to allow more movement. Always work to levels without pain. The advantage of these is that with daily practice the body will become more supple and the range of motion will gradually increase. In case of doubt, please consult a qualified QiGong instructor for clarification on proper structure and movement. Except for “Rolling the hips” all these exercises can be done while seated.

## **Rolling the fingers/toes**

1. grasp the finger by the tip. Use a firm grip to grasp the entire bone and not just the fingernail.
2. GENTLY roll the finger clockwise and counter-clockwise alternately. The rolling or twisting will stretch the joints in either direction along the length of the finger. The repetitions should feel comfortable for you. More advanced stages of arthritis will require a much slower pace of rolling. For generally healthy joints the pace can be a little bit quicker. NEVER FAST!.

## **Rolling the wrist**

1. interlock your fingers so that the palms face each other and are touching.
2. Roll your hands 9 times in clockwise circles.
3. Roll your hands 9 times in counter clockwise circles.

## **Swimming Octopus**

1. stretch your hands forward while extending the fingers and spreading them out.
2. contract (bend) the fingers and pull the wrist and hand back
3. repeat in smooth motion imitating the swimming action of an octopus for 9 times.

## **Rolling the neck**

1. start facing forward. Exhale and drop your chin to your chest. Feel the tension along the back of the spine equally distributed on the left and right.
2. inhale while lifting the head to the right shoulder. Look straight over the tip of the right shoulder. The tension should be felt along the tip of the left shoulder (opposite side).
3. exhale keeping the chin close to the chest and roll back to the center. You should be facing down with your chin tucked into the chest.
4. inhale to the left, guiding the tension from the center along the right trapezius muscles until you are looking over your left shoulder and the right shoulder is tensed.
5. exhale back to the center keeping the chin tucked in and feeling the tension roll along the back towards the center of the spine.
6. Repeat 3 times to each side.
7. End in the center finally lifting the head back into normal posture.

**Rolling the waist**

1. stand with the feet shoulder width apart. Trying to keep the lower part of the body (from the hips down) still, roll your torso in circles over the “trunk” of your legs/hips. Roll 9 times to the right
2. roll 9 times to the left.

**Rolling the hips**

1. stand with feet shoulder width apart. Trying to keep the top of the body still roll the lower part of the body in circles to the right. It helps to look at a fixed object in front of you. Make 9 circles
2. Then repeat with 9 circles to the left

**Bending the knees**

1. holding onto a chair slowly bend the knees as far as you feel comfortable.

**Rolling the feet**

Make circles with the tips of your feet in clockwise and counter-clockwise circles.