



Falls constitute a silent and serious public health hazard. According to data from the National Safety Council, each week more than 30,000 people over the age of 65 are seriously injured in a fall; nearly 25% die from their injuries. One out of every three seniors will fall in the next year. In Nebraska over 13,000 falls required emergency room treatment for our seniors in 2001 alone. Statistical evidence predicts that as many as 24,000 of our elderly in the greater Metro area will fall in the next year. It doesn't have to be that way...

#### About F1RST

Through awareness, education, training and research proven interventions provided by a collaboration of many organizations in our community, F1RST engages our older adults, their adult children and caregivers in an effort to reduce the trauma and injuries caused by falling.

F1RST provides help to our community and encourages others to participate in this important initiative. It will take a strong effort across our entire community to be successful in this endeavor.

Watch [www.F1RST.org](http://www.F1RST.org) for new and expanded initiatives.



# MOVEMENT IMPROVEMENT Tai Chi



For more information:  
National Safety Council,  
Greater Omaha Chapter  
11620 M Circle  
Omaha, NE 68137  
402-896-0454  
[www.F1RST.org](http://www.F1RST.org)



## **Movement Improvement T'ai Chi**

"Movement Improvement" for balance and mobility from Rising Phoenix T'ai Chi and Shoulders Down, Inc. is based on the basics of T'ai Chi and Qi Gong. It can help in many areas of everyday life.

Movements are designed and instructed for all levels of physical ability, and taught at a pace all can follow. Moves to loosen the major muscle groups, provide full rotation of the joints, and create balance and stability are emphasized. And it's fun!

### **Why T'ai Chi?**

T'ai Chi is a proven intervention that prevents falling among older adults. Two studies sponsored by the National Institute on Aging (NIA), found that T'ai Chi can significantly cut the risk of falls among older people and may also be beneficial in maintaining gains made by people age 70 and older who undergo other types of balance and strength training. Further, T'ai Chi's non-impact, relaxed environment is ideal for all because it can be adapted to the individual... It has been proven to reduce the risk to seniors of falling by nearly 50%, plus it can be done while seated or standing with or without support.

### **Local Instructors Throughout the Community**

FIRST "Movement Improvement T'ai Chi" instructors are trained and certified by well-known instructor Cate Morrill of Rising Phoenix T'ai Chi and Shoulders Down Inc., Atlanta, Georgia. Morrill, noted author and publisher of articles on T'ai Chi and Qi Gong, has been the instructor for NIH Clinical Studies with Emory University on T'ai Chi and Parkinson's Disease and other studies. She has designed and produced audio and video tapes, written study guides and appeared via video and in person at conferences, symposiums and on television discussing the therapeutic benefits of T'ai Chi to specific populations.

### **"Movement Improvement T'ai Chi" Gives Results!**

Seniors enrolled in this program report greater flexibility, balance and confidence. Generally, blood pressure is reduced, cardio-respiratory capacity increases, and a general feeling of well-being and being in control, is established. As participants become stronger, the moves become easier and continued movement development takes place.

This program uses moves easily followed and easily applied to real life situations; therefore "practice" becomes an on-going, daily activity. When older adults incorporate this knowledge into their own situations, true value is the result.

### **Here's What People Say**

"I'm 78 and I can't believe how much energy it's given me ... it's the feeling of peaceful achievement, and I can stand on one foot!" - Leila

"I started seeing changes after only about four weeks, now I can walk a straight line! I don't plan on stopping, so I plan on just keeping going! I want to be able to have the mobility and balance I have become accustomed to these last few weeks. It is just, I don't know any other way to describe it, other than it is amazing!." - Joe

### **Find a Class Near You**

Individuals can find class locations, schedule and registration information on our website, [www.FIRST.org](http://www.FIRST.org) or call us.

### **Your Organization Can Sponsor Classes**

FIRST is seeking senior centers, adult assisted living residences, retirement villages, faith communities and other organizations where seniors gather, to hold classes. Please call us to arrange a class.

## **You Will Be Part of an Important Community Initiative**

Enrolling as an individual in the FIRST "Movement Improvement T'ai Chi" program or establishing a class at your organization will make you part of a large community effort to reduce falls among our older adult population.

Our goal is to train individuals in techniques so that they are applied both in and out of class on a continuing basis. Follow up of class attendees is completed at various intervals to track progress.

### **Interested in a Demonstration?**

Five to thirty minute demonstrations are available. Contact the Greater Omaha Chapter of the National Safety Council with your request.

### *Use These Resources:*

#### **Movement Improvement T'ai Chi Video or DVD**

For seated or standing work, this video leads the student through 14 warm-up moves, 12 simple exercise moves, a mini-set of 5 basic T'ai Chi moves, 6 Cool Down moves, a positive affirmation moment, and provides a routine performed with both instruction and in silence. It is recommended that students participate in a group class and use the video for additional support.

*Video/DVD can be purchased from FIRST for \$30.00 including tax. If you would like it mailed, please add \$5 shipping and handling.*

#### **FIRST Tool Kit**

The FIRST Tool Kit has helpful information from organizations and resources all across America.

Included are:

Balance Self Test  
Lower the Risk of Falls  
Getting Up from a Fall  
Home Safety Checklist  
Health & Exercise

Medication Tracker  
Adapting to Low Vision  
Fall Resources for Loan  
Falls Web Resources  
"Stepping Out" NHTSA

*Kits are available free of charge if you pick them up, or they can be mailed to you for a \$3 shipping and handling fee.*