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Effect of Health Qigong on Type II Diabetic Patients-- A Comparative Group Study

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Introduction

According to the statistics of Department of Health, diabetes is one of the most deadly diseases in Hong Kong. Qigong as one of the alternative therapy had showed effectiveness in improving both physiological health and quality of life of person with chronic disease like Diabetes. We conducted the study to explore the effect of Health Qigong as an intervention for the management of diabetes in compare with Walking Exercise

Objectives

To evaluate and compare the effect of Health Qigong and Walking Exercise on: (1) Physiological function like Fasting Blood Glucose, Haemoglobin A1c, low density lipoprotein(LDL), Triglycerides(TG) and Total Cholesterol; Cardiovascular profile on Blood Pressure, Pulse Wave Analysis, Heart Rate Variability (HRV); (2) Psychological function on Quality of Life (QoL), for Type II Diabetic patients after a 12 weeks' pair group program

Methodology

An experimental design was employed with the use of blood test, physical instruments and questionnaires. Subjects were (1) Type II Diabetic patients (2) Sedentary lifestyle (3) Ambulatory without assistance (4) Age less or equal to 75 (5) Stable medical condition and medication within 3 months. Patients who followed up in Diabetics Ambulatory Care Centre in United Christian Hospital were randomized to either Qigong group or Walking Exercise group. A 12-week Health Qigong or Walking Exercise program were prescribed. Data were compared at entry and 3 month post intervention.

Result

From May 2009 to Feb 2011, 25 patients were recruited with 11 patients in Health Qigong group, and 14 in Walking Exercises group. Mean age of Health Qigong group was 61.3 while Walking Exercise group was 55.5. The gender ratio (M:F) for Health Qigong group was 3:8 while for Walking Exercise Group was 4:10. Statistical tests showed that there was no significant difference in the demographic and baseline variables in the groups. Paired t-test revealed that both Health Qigong and Walking Exercise were effective in reducing LDL and TG, while heart rate variability (HRV) was reduced in the Walking Exercise group. There were no significant differences in the 8 domains of Short Form 36 (SF36) either within or between the two groups.

Mann-Whitney U test showed that there was no statistical difference on the overall effects through either the use of Health Qigong or Walking Exercise. Conclusion The study showed that both Health Qigong and Walking Exercise have comparable biological and psychological effect on Type II Diabetic patients. Both were simple and acceptable to the patients. Large sample study is required to confirm the benefit and clarify the effect on heart rate variability.