

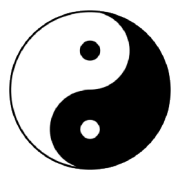
## Reiki Master Practitioner Training (see page 7)

Reiki Student (Level 1): Sept 15<sup>th</sup>

Reiki Practitioner (L. 2): Oct 20<sup>th</sup>

Reiki Master (Level 3): Nov 17<sup>th</sup>

'We're beginning now to understand things that we know in our hearts are true but we could never measure. As we get better at understanding how little we know about the body we begin to realize that the next big frontier in medicine is energy medicine.'



# COMPLEMENTARY

## Autumn 2019 HEALTH & EXERCISE

Your source for information on complementary forms of health and exercise

Volume 13, number 3

[www.7StarsMA.com](http://www.7StarsMA.com)

Circulation: 400+

# The Forgotten Art of Squatting is a Revelation for Bodies Ruined by Sitting

Sentences that start with the phrase ðA guru once told meí ð are, more often than not, eye-roll-inducing. But recently, while resting in malasana, or a deep squat, in an East London yoga class, I was struck by the second half of the instructor's sentence: ðA guru once told me that the problem with the West is they don't squat.ð

Continued on page 10

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 6 Asian Squats Improve Health, Flexibility and Balance
- 14 Asian vs Western Toilets
- 16 What is the Asian Squat and its Health Benefits

## Why Can't Everyone Do the 'Asian Squat'?

### All the way down! Not on your toes!

Among the more practical advice that can be offered to international travelers is wisdom of the bathroom. So let me say, as someone who recently returned from China, that you should be prepared to one, carry your own toilet paper and two, practice your squat.

Continued on page 4

### FEATURES

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# Complementary Health & Exercise

Autumn 2019

Editor & publisher - John Robertson



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## The Wisdom of Confucius

*"Men's natures are alike, it is their  
habits that carry them far apart "*

## Editor's Notebook

We have a very special event coming up this autumn, we are joining forces with Benjamin Savage, a Gong Master for a combined session at Natural healing centers in Tinley Park, IL. Ben will be playing his gongs while we go through warm ups and the T'ai Chi Shibashi routine. Once complete participants can then sit or lie down and relax to be bathed in the cleansing vibrations to create a true healing. I have not seen anyone else offering this experience so don't miss it! Space is limited, so register early.

Our Reiki Master class is also coming up, running one day in September, October and November it will teach you how to use the energy of the universe to create healing within you and others. Space is limited to six participants, and this class will not be offered again until autumn next year, so take advantage of this time!

This summer we have been working hard on recording and producing guided meditations, and have just a couple to complete. These are all available in the members area of our website and will soon be available for purchase individually. These can all be downloaded as mp3 files to play on your phone or player. Each has a soothing background track to take you into deeper and deeper states of relaxation. Not a member? Look out for these in class over the coming weeks.

The members area of our website also contains instructional videos of T'ai Chi Qigong Shibashi (the 18 form), Yang 24 posture T'ai Chi Chuan and many more. There are also unedited videos of live classes, warts and all!

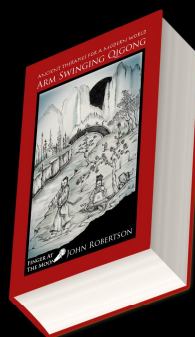
Membership information is available on our website [www.7StarsMA.com](http://www.7StarsMA.com) and also in flyers available in class. For less than the cost of a cup of coffee every fortnight you have access to everything online.

*John Robertson*  
*"He lives most life whoever  
breathes most air"*

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BY JOHN ROBERTSON



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# Why Can't Everyone Do the 'Asian Squat'?

All the way down! Not on your toes!

SARAH ZHANG MAR 16, 2018

Continued from page 1:

I do not mean those goofy chairless sits you see at the gym. No, toned glutes will not save you here. I mean the deep squat, where you plop your butt down as far as it can go while staying aloft and balanced on the heels.

This position— in contrast to deep squatting on your toes as most Americans naturally attempt instead— is so stable that people in China can hold it for minutes and perhaps even hours ...

... while eating.

...while smoking.

...while waiting for customers.

...while examining art.

And, for our purposes, while using the bathroom. Toilets are common in Chinese households now, but public restrooms are still dominated by squat pans, which many Chinese find more hygienic due to the lack of thigh-and-toilet-seat contact.

The flat-heeled squat position here is crucial, not only for stability on wet porcelain but also— without getting too anatomical— for proper angling and position. Especially for the ladies. Let's just say if you stay on your toes, your shoes will get hosed.

(Pro tip: Wearing a slight heel helps.)

Of course, squat toilets are not unique to Asia, nor is the deep-squatting position. But so ubiquitous is the position in Asia and so invisible it is in the West that it's been dubbed the "Asian squat." The internet is rife with suggestions that most Americans cannot squat properly, an idea with which I particularly enjoyed taunting my white American boyfriend.

But is this true? Were my taunts fact-based? How much is this nature or nurture? I figured I first had to understand the physiology of the deep squat.

Luckily, at least one other person on the internet is obsessed with squats as me, and he knows something about physiology. That would be Bryan Ausinheiler,



Singapore's prime minister Lee Hsien Loong squats to take a photo on the White House lawn REUTERS /

a physical therapist in California who has penned a series of blog posts about the deep squat. "The squat is a great model for a multi-segmental movement pattern," Ausinheiler rattled off at the beginning of our phone call. Uh, what does that mean? "The squat is a triple flexion movement. You've got bending at the hips, knees, and ankle, so you have to fold everything up underneath you." There's a lot going on.

But the key factor seems to be ankle flexibility. In the words of our editor Ross Andersen, "squatting makes me feel like I might rupture my Achilles." A 2009 study in Japan found that men who found it impossible to deep squat had particularly inflexible ankles.

This is also in part, Ausinheiler says, why kids have no problem squatting. "I measured my daughter's ankle flexibility when she was one day old," says Ausinheiler. "She has 70 degrees of ankle dorsiflexion! Normal in the West is like 30." So humans are born squatters; some of us lose it when we stop trying.

In fact, not everyone who can deep squat is, as Ausinheiler puts it, squatting "well," with feet close together and toes pointed forward. I grew up in the United States with few occasions to squat, and I fall into this category. (A fact I was painfully aware of in China because I had to place my feet wider than the grooved sides of the squat toilet that kept you from slipping on the wet floor.) The position, while doable, is not particularly comfortable for me either. When an editor dared me to write this entire article while squatting, I quickly realized I'd either end up with an





extremely short article or a workplace injury.

Body shape also seems to play a role. Short limbs, big heads, and long torsos make it easier to balance. (Again why toddlers have it so easy.) I have three brothers, so of course every year I test all their abilities to deep squat, Ausinheiler told me. What I found is of the four of us, my squat is the best, I gotta say, but I am also most conscious of technique. I have another brother who has even shorter legs than me. His squat isn't quite as good as mine but it is very easy for him. And then the brother with the longest legs has the worst squat. He kind of has a hard time with it.

Believe it or not, no one appears to have actually studied innate ability in deep squatting across ethnic groups. You would have to take kids from the time they're born in China and never let them do any squats to be a control group, and it'll never happen, says Matt Hudson, a physiologist at the University of Delaware, who kindly humored my questions. And ultimately, it may not matter. Practice and training make the bigger difference. (I suggested to my boyfriend that he could improve his squats, but he refused for reasons I cannot fathom.)

And Ausinheiler says he has seen more people interested in doing a deep squat thanks to Crossfit. Weightlifters squat in a deep position, pushing up through the heels. And weightlifting shoes, Hudson points out, usually have a slight heel to help. Crossfit has turned a lot of people into weightlifters and in turn, made them conscious of their stiff ankles.

There is another group of pro-squatters, those who believe America's bowel problems can be blamed on toilet seats (the argument has to do with the anorectal angle). Squatting is of course how our ancestors pooped for millennia. Yet this ability that comes so naturally to cavemen and to babies has been lost to many Western toilet sitters and it's not so easy to get it back.

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# Asian Squats Improve Health, Flexibility and Balance

JUNE 18, 2014 BY CATE LEONA

Professional Chinese basketball players are doing it, businessmen at a restaurant are doing it, children at a playground are doing it, and pregnant women in a line up are doing it – the Asian squat! While most non-Asians find it difficult to do the Asian squat, Asians learn the squat as young children and continue to use the position daily throughout their lives. Squatting is not only comfortable; it also promotes physical health. This simple seating position can help you be fit for life. Worldwide, more and more people are learning this beneficial exercise. We review how to do the Asian squat with comfort.

If you do not do squats or exercises that work the same muscles, you may initially find it uncomfortable. Asians are not more anatomically predisposed to do squats than Westerners. All it takes to do Asian squats is practice. Practice improves flexibility.

## Advantages of the Asian Squat

The Asian squat came to Asia from India. It predates formal furniture. Modern conveniences are not always better for us. The car is convenient but walking is much healthier. In Asia, we can see this advantage of the Asian squat everywhere. In the streets, people play cards and other games wherever they desire. No card table is required. Gathering for meals also is easy. In many parts of Asia, there are no formal toilets. The Asian squat is often used even with formal toilets due to the health advantages. If you visit Asia, you may need to use an Asian squat toilet. Learn the proper squat toilet etiquette before you go.

The Asian squat has many health advantages. It improves digestion and bowel function. You may look like you have better posture in a chair but, in fact, your organs and genitourinary tract are in straighter alignment and more open in the Asian squat. You are also massaging the bladder, bowl and intestines at the same time.

Many of us have tight hips, knee joints and ankles. As we grow older, we lose more flexibility. The Asian squat works many muscles, including stretching the thighs, calves, hamstrings and glut muscles. Motion in the hip and knee are improved. The Asian squat

strengthens your cores, especially when you lower and raise your body into position. It is the solution to many back problems caused by incorrect posture. Western scientists recently completed a study showing that individuals who can stand up straight from a cross-legged position without supports live longer and healthier lives. Add longevity to the many benefits.

Asians can comfortably sit in the squat position for a long time. They may read a book, eat a meal or take a work break in a squat position.

## Posture in the Asian Squat

The Asian squat is better for the posture than a chair. The center of gravity is above the feet providing better balance. Less pressure is placed on the knees. Those who use the Asian squat say they have more energy.

## How to Do the Asian Squat

It is worth mastering the Asian squat to benefit from its many health advantages. While it keeps leg and stomach muscles toned, if you are not using these muscles initially you may feel very uncomfortable. Start by squatting for several minutes a day.

Note the proper alignment in the fourth person, although his buttocks could be lowered further.

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.  
Lower your buttocks while bending your knees until your buttocks touches your heels  
Feet are flat on the floor, including the heel.  
Your center of gravity is over your feet and belly button. In contrast, the Western squat places more weight forward on the knees and patellar tendon.  
Make sure your knees are behind the toes.  
Slowly rise out of the squat focusing on the belly button to maintain your balance.

Rising from the Asian Squat builds control, strength and balance in your legs.

These positions should be avoided. Notice the heels off the ground and weight on the knees in position one. The body alignment is asking for back aches in the other three.

Continued on page 8:



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November 6<sup>th</sup> ~ 6:30pm



## Blood Circulation Exercises

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November 20<sup>th</sup> ~ 6:30pm

630-784-6100



Continued from page 6:

The biggest challenge for Westerners seems to be getting the feet flat on the ground. Practice for a few minutes a day and slowly elongated the resisting muscles. Well into old age, you will appreciate the added flexibility. The important point to remember is to ensure flat feet and proper balance to keep the stress off of the knee joints, which is one of the advantages of the Asian squat.

Reports of arthritis are higher in those who place stress in the knee joints. If you are constantly leaning forward in your squat, say to play a game, then you should reconsider your sitting position. The beauty of the squat is that one can engage in activity while maintaining proper posture and balance. Falling out of proper posture is more of a risk for newbies. With tight muscles, you may try to lean forward to ease the strain which, in turn, places the strain on the knees. Avoid doing so!

## Asian Squats and Physical Activity

Asian squats complement many other physical activities. Tai Chi provides complimentary muscle toning and flexibility and health benefits. You can enjoy these benefits by enrolling in the online course Improve Your Physical and Mental Success With Tai Chi. Tai Chi will help you become more flexible and relaxed. The many semi-squats used in various positions are good preparation for the Asian squat. Tai Chi has many of its own health benefits including reported improvements by those with fibromyalgia and knee osteoarthritis. Learning the positions, breathing and energy work of Thai Chi will improve your overall flexibility.

For some athletes, daily squatting can maintain important alignment. If you are a gymnast, singer or firefighter manipulating heavy equipment, the core strengthening will help you improve your performance. In weightlifting, this strengthening and alignment is critical, as demonstrated in Learning the Proper Way in Performing the Squat. Practicing the Asian squat will help you do weightlifting squats without injury.

Asian squats can both prevent and bring relief to neck and back aches. Consider a complimentary yoga program. Yoga for Neck and Back Care will help you stretch out key muscle groups and strengthen your posture. Pain-free posture and movement, moving and exercising pain free, and strengthening your core are all benefits of yoga and Asian squats.



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## Lombard

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Continuing students meet every  
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## Roselle

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# The Forgotten Art of Squatting is a Revelation for Bodies Ruined by Sitting

By Rosie Spinks November 9, 2017

Continued from page 1:

This is plainly true. In much of the developed world, resting is synonymous with sitting. We sit in desk chairs, eat from dining chairs, commute seated in cars or on trains, and then come home to watch Netflix from comfy couches. With brief respites for walking from one chair to another, or short intervals for frenzied exercise, we spend our days mostly sitting. This devotion to placing our backsides in chairs makes us an outlier, both globally and historically. In the past half century, epidemiologists have been forced to shift how they study movement patterns. In modern times, the sheer amount of sitting we do is a separate problem from the amount of exercise we get.

Our failure to squat has biomechanical and physiological implications, but it also points to something bigger. In a world where we spend so much time in our heads, in the cloud, on our phones, the absence of squatting leaves us bereft of the grounding force that the posture has provided since our hominid ancestors first got up off the floor. In other words: If what we

want is to be well, it might be time for us to get low. To be clear, squatting isn't just an artifact of our evolutionary history. A large swath of the planet's population still does it on a daily basis, whether to rest, to pray, to cook, to share a meal, or to use the toilet. (Squat-style toilets are the norm in Asia, and pit latrines in rural areas all over the world require squatting.) As they learn to walk, toddlers from New Jersey to Papua New Guinea squat and stand up from a squat with grace and ease. In countries where hospitals are not widespread, squatting is also a position associated with that most fundamental part of life: birth.

It's not specifically the West that no longer squats; it's the rich and middle classes all over the world. My Quartz colleague, Akshat Rathi, originally from India, remarked that the guru's observation would be as true among the rich in Indian cities as it is in the West.

But in Western countries, entire populations—rich and poor—have abandoned the posture. On the whole, squatting is seen as an undignified and uncom-

comfortable posture one we avoid entirely. At best, we might undertake it during Crossfit, pilates or while lifting at the gym, but only partially and often with weights (a repetitive maneuver that's hard to imagine being useful 2.5 million years ago). This ignores the fact that deep squatting as a form of active rest is built in to both our evolutionary and developmental past: It's not that you can't comfortably sit in a deep squat, it's just that you've forgotten how.

"The game started with squatting," says author and osteopath Phillip Beach. Beach is known for pioneering the idea of "archetypal postures." These positions—which, in addition to a deep passive squat with the feet flat on the floor, include sitting cross legged and kneeling on one's knees and heels—are not just good for us, but "deeply embedded into the way our bodies are built."

"You really don't understand human bodies until you realize how important these postures are," Beach, who is based in Wellington, New Zealand, tells me. "Here in New Zealand, it's cold and wet and muddy. Without modern trousers, I wouldn't want to put my backside in the cold wet mud, so [in absence of a chair] I would spend a lot of time squatting. The same thing with going to the toilet. The whole way your physiology is built is around these postures."

It comes down to a simple matter of "use it or lose it," says Dr. Bahram Jam, a physical therapist and founder of the Advanced Physical Therapy Education Institute (APTEI) in Ontario, Canada.

"Every joint in our body has synovial fluid in it. This is the oil in our body that provides nutrition to the cartilage," Jam says. "Two things are required to produce that fluid: movement and compression. So if a joint doesn't go through its full range—if the hips and knees never go past 90 degrees—the body says 'I am not being used' and starts to degenerate and stops the production of synovial fluid."

A healthy musculoskeletal system doesn't just make us feel lithe and juicy, it also has implications for our wider health. A 2014 study in the *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology* found that test subjects who showed difficulty getting up off the floor without support of hands, or an elbow, or leg (what's called the "sitting-rising test") resulted in a three-year-shorter life expectancy than subjects who got up with ease. In the West, the reason people stopped squatting regularly has a lot to do with our toilet design. Holes in the ground, outhouses and chamber pots all re-

quired the squat position, and studies show that greater hip flexion in this pose is correlated with less strain when relieving oneself. Seated toilets are by no means a British invention—the first simple toilets date back to Mesopotamia in the fourth millennium B.C., while the ancient Minoans on the island of Crete are said to have first pioneered the flush—but they were first adopted in Britain by the Tudors, who enlisted "grooms of the stool" to help them relieve themselves in ornate, throne-like loos in the 16th century.

The next couple hundred years saw slow, uneven toilet innovation, but in 1775 a watchmaker named Alexander Cummings developed an S-shape pipe which sat below a raised cistern, a crucial development. It wasn't until after the mid-to-late-1800s, when London finally built a functioning sewer system after persistent cholera outbreaks and the horrific-sounding "great stink" of 1858, that fully flushable, seated toilets started to commonly appear in people's homes.

Today, the flushable squat-style toilets found across Asia are, of course, no less sanitary than Western counterparts. But Jam says Europe's shift to the seated throne design robbed most Westerners of the need (and therefore the daily practice) of squatting. Indeed the realization that squatting leads to better bowel movements has fueled the cult-like popularity of the Lillipad and the Squatty Potty, raised platforms that turn a Western-style toilet into a squatting one—and allow the user to sit in a flexed position that mimics a squat.

"The reason squatting is so uncomfortable because we don't do it," Jam says. "But if you go to the restroom once or twice a day for a bowel movement and five times a day for bladder function, that's five or six times a day you've squatted."

While this physical discomfort may be the main reason we don't squat more, the West's aversion to the squat is cultural, too. While squatting or sitting cross legged in an office chair would be great for the hip joint, the modern worker's wardrobe—not to mention formal office etiquette—generally makes this kind of posture unfeasible. The only time we might expect a Western leader or elected official to hover close to the ground is for a photo-op with cute kindergarteners. Indeed, the people we see squatting on the sidewalk in a city like New York or London tend to be the

Continued on page 13:

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Call: 630 993-8193



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111 E. Foster Avenue,  
Wood Dale, IL 60191

Thursday at 11:00am

classes start:  
August 22<sup>nd</sup> & October 10<sup>th</sup>

Call: 630 595 9333

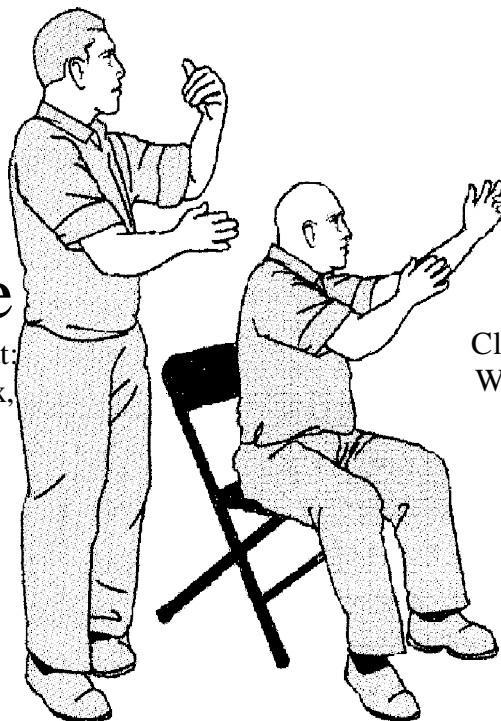
## Bloomingtondale

Classes are held in Wood Dale at:  
Wood Dale Recreation Complex,  
111 E. Foster Avenue,  
Wood Dale, IL 60191

Thursday at 11:00am

classes start:  
August 22<sup>nd</sup> & October 10<sup>th</sup>

Call: 630 595 9333



## Bensenville

Classes are held in Wood Dale at:  
Wood Dale Recreation Complex,  
111 E. Foster Avenue,  
Wood Dale, IL 60191

Thursday at 11:00am

classes start:  
August 22<sup>nd</sup> & October 10<sup>th</sup>

Call: 630 595 9333





Continued from page 11:

types of people we blow past in self-important rush. It's considered primitive and of low social status to squat somewhere," says Jam. "When we think of squatting we think of a peasant in India, or an African village tribesman, or an unhygienic city floor. We think we've evolved past that but really we've devolved away from it."

Avni Trivedi, a doula and osteopath based in London (disclosure: I have visited her in the past for my own sitting-induced aches) says the same is true of squatting as a birthing position, which is still prominent in many developing parts of the world and is increasingly advocated by holistic birthing movements in the West.

In a squatting birthing position, the muscles relax and you're allowing the sacrum to have free movement so the baby can push down, with gravity playing a role too," Trivedi says. "But the perception that this position was primitive is why women went from this active position to being on the bed, where they are less embodied and have less agency in the birthing process."

So should we replace sitting with squatting and say goodbye to our office chairs forever? Beach points out that "any posture held for too long causes problems" and there are studies to suggest that populations that spend excessive time in a deep squat (hours per day), do have a higher incidence of knee and osteoarthritis issues.

But for those of us who have largely abandoned squatting, Beach says, "you can't really overdo this stuff." Beyond this kind of movement improving our joint health and flexibility, Trivedi points out that a growing interest in yoga worldwide is perhaps in part a recognition that "being on the ground helps you physically be grounded in yourself" something that's largely missing from our screen-dominated, hyper-intellectualized lives.

Beach agrees that this is not a trend, but an evolutionary impulse. Modern wellness movements are starting to acknowledge that "floor life" is key. He argues that the physical act of grounding ourselves has been nothing short of instrumental to our species becoming.

In a sense, squatting is where humans — every single one of us — came from, so it behooves us to revisit it as often as we can.

## Blood Circulation Exercises

Poor circulation is very often a silent killer as its symptoms may easily be overlooked. Any congestion or blockage in the perfectly tuned roadmap of veins and arteries can deprive the heart, lungs, brain, extremities and organs of the precious oxygen rich blood. Healthy circulation is essential to maintaining a healthy body. Using a combination of self massage and simple exercises we will seek to improve circulation in our hands, feet, face and body. Healthy circulation helps promote cell growth and organ function, helps you look and feel healthy. Your skin will have a healthy color and you will feel warm to the touch. Good blood circulation helps improve brain function and keeps your mind sharp and focused. Be prepared to remove your shoes and socks.

September 18<sup>th</sup> ~ 6:30pm



## Discover the secrets of Chinese Health Balls



Their use can reduce your risk of arthritis, tendonitis, carpal tunnel, rheumatism, repetitive stress injury, dementia & Alzheimer's.

They can help reduce stress, aid relaxation and help prolong life.

October 13<sup>th</sup> ~ 9:00am - noon



# Asian Squat Toilet versus Western Sit Toilet



## The Down and Dirty

If you've been to the Far East, then you've probably used the so-called squatting toilet. Abhorred by many foreigners, this toilet forces you to squat down when going number two, greatly reducing the comfort of your bathroom visit.

Some say it's a backward and demeaning practice, others laud the squatting toilet for its naturalist approach to bowel movements.

### Health Benefits of Squatting

Over time, Western toilets have become synonymous with progress, modernity, and hygiene, but it's doubtful whether the first inventors of the modern-day flushing toilet had any knowledge of human physiology.

In fact, after Jimmy Carter had to take a day off from work in 1978 because of a severe case of hemor-

roids, a proctologist famously explained to Time Magazine that "we were not meant to sit on toilets, we were meant to squat in the field."

Recent research suggests that there are numerous health benefits to using the squatting position, especially when it comes to hemorrhoid prevention.

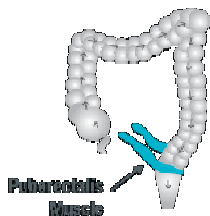
### Seven benefits of squatting

1. Makes elimination faster, easier, and more complete. This helps prevent "fecal stagnation," a prime factor in colon cancer, appendicitis, and inflammatory bowel disease.
2. Protects the nerves that control the prostate, bladder, and uterus from becoming stretched and damaged.
3. Securely seals the ileocecal valve, between the colon and the small intestine. In the conventional sitting



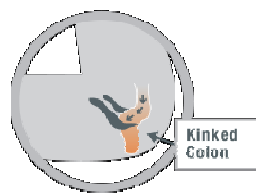
#### WE ARE DESIGNED TO SQUAT

Humans have squatted for millennia - until the advent of the modern toilet.



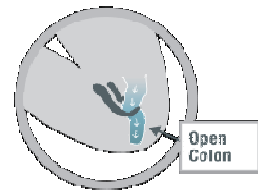
#### THIS IS YOUR COLON

The colon has a natural kink that helps maintain continence.



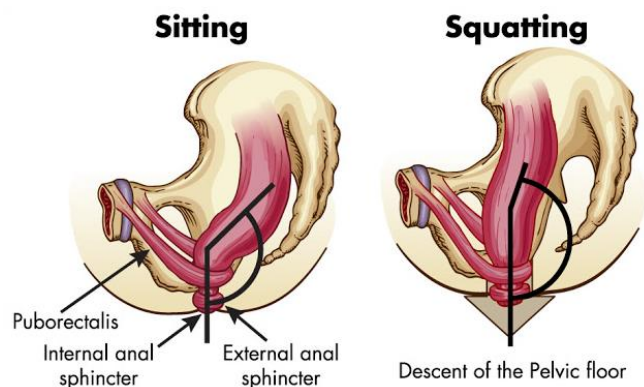
#### SITTING STOPS THE FLOW

Sitting posture **partially releases** the tight muscle around the colon, blocking the flow of waste.



#### SQUATTY POTTY® OPENS THE COLON

Proper toilet posture **fully releases** the muscle, allowing the colon to empty quickly and completely.



position, this valve is unsupported and often leaks during bowel movements, contaminating the small intestine.

4. Relaxes the puborectalis muscle which normally chokes the rectum in order to maintain continence.
5. Uses the thighs to support the colon and prevent straining. Chronic straining on the toilet can cause hernias, diverticulosis, and pelvic organ prolapse.
6. A highly effective, non-invasive treatment for hemorrhoids, as shown by published clinical research.
7. For pregnant women, squatting avoids pressure on the uterus when using the toilet. Daily squatting helps prepare one for a more natural delivery.

## Conclusion

There surely is something to be said for using the squatting toilet/position when going number two, and it will aid in the prevention of a series of ailments.

Plus your average time on the toilet is greatly reduced - unless you squat there for an extended period of time scrolling through social media on your phone.

That being said, most of us still value comfort and luxury over the (relatively minor) health benefits, and it's doubtful whether the squatting toilet will ever become a fad in the west.



## Discover the secrets of Chinese Health Balls

Their use can reduce your risk of arthritis, tendonitis, carpal tunnel, rheumatism, repetitive stress injury, dementia & Alzheimer's.

They can help reduce stress, aid relaxation and help prolong life.

September 4<sup>th</sup> ~ 6:30 - 9:30pm

630-784-6100



## Qigong

The inner health of the body is just as important as the outer health; through the mind-body practice of qigong you can improve your health and longevity, boost your immune system and reduce stress.

Using slow, gentle, graceful rocking and stretching motions combined with deep relaxed breathing; your circulation and digestion will be improved; it can help calm your mind, reduce tension and anxiety, and regulate heart rate and blood pressure, boosting energy. Students may choose to sit or stand as needed; making this class suitable for all ages and abilities.

October 2<sup>nd</sup> ~ 6:30pm

630-784-6100





# What is the Asian Squat and its Health Benefits

Written by Kim Hoang for itourvn.com



The practice of the Asian squat is so uncommon in the Western world, yet incredibly significant in the other hemisphere that it is supposed to be the innate ability of most Asians.

However, the Asian squat has been gaining profound recognition in recent times because of its physical enhancement. So what is the Asian squat and its health benefits, let's discuss more in our blog!

## What is the Asian squat

Sit flatly on your feet - not on your toes - and lower your buttocks all the way down to your ankles with your knees slightly spread apart. The position is supposed to evenly distribute the pressure on the heels and leg muscles rather than putting it on the toes and knees. Having said that, the Asian squat is an integral part of life rather than merely a yoga pose.

Most Asians can hold the squat for minutes, or even hours no matter when they are eating or just hanging out on the street. On top of that, if you happen to travel to the countryside areas, such as the Mekong Delta in Vietnam, the majority of the households are still using the traditional squat toilets. Learning about what is the Asian squat is also figuring out the Asian bathroom etiquette: how to strike a balance and be stable without putting a severe strain on

your joints.

## Why everybody should do the Asian squat

Besides the aforementioned bathroom wisdom, practicing the Asian squat provides such immense health benefits that it will take you by complete surprise.

## Asian Squat Health Benefits

1. Asian squat fixes better posture. It may seem that you have a better sitting position on a chair, but it may cause slouching in the long run.
2. Increases the efficiency of the elimination process, making it faster and easier. Hence, digestion and bowel function are significantly improved.
3. Asian squat is particularly beneficial for pregnant women as it helps to avoid pressure on the uterus and prepares for an easier and more natural delivery.
4. Asian squat works many muscles instead of your joints and bones. Consequently, the core is strengthened and the body's flexibility is improved substantially.
5. Improves circulation as your organs and genitourinary tracts are in a straighter alignment in the Asian squat. They are also stimulated and massaged to increase blood flow.
6. Gets rid of lower back and knee pain since the weight is evenly distributed throughout the leg muscles in doing the Asian squat.
7. 100% of people who perform Asian squats can find comfortable seats as long as there is a little space on the ground.

## Conclusion on the Asian Squat

The ability to perform the Asian squat is not a genetic gift that belongs to one single ethnicity only. Subsequently, now that you've learned what the Asian squat is, don't hesitate to put it into practice right away.

It may feel uncomfortable at first because it will take time to build up your flexibility. However, practice makes perfect, and it is for the sake of your well-being after all.



# The Surprising Health Benefits Behind the Asian Squat

Tuesday, 28 November 2017 written by Saigoneer.

The Asian squat has been getting lots of attention these past few years, but most recently it has been revealed that there may be health benefits to this sitting position that is often coveted by westerners.

The squat itself is simple. You place both feet flat on the ground and hunker down with your butt touching your ankles and your knees slightly spreading apart. It's easy in theory, but seemingly impossible for most in actual practice.

The ability to perform this squat is largely considered something passed down through genetics. A study comdetailed the results of a study that showed 100% of Asian people being able to perform the squat, while only 13.5% of North Americans were able to. Of that 13.5%, 9% had some sort of Asian ancestry.

The one person in the study without Asian ancestry who could do the squat was reportedly "a yoga freak". For the most part, it would seem that in terms of the ability to do the squat, you either have it, or you don't. It's similar to how some people have a taste for cilantro versus those that think it tastes like dishwashing liquid.

People who can perform the squat have always lived with the convenience of having a comfortable seat wherever they find a bit of space on the ground, and now it seems that there are added health benefits to it.

It's a widely accepted fact that squatting when using the toilet helps digestion, as explained by Health and



Continued on page 18



## T'ai Chi Sword

Classes start:  
August 20<sup>th</sup> & October 8<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday - 3:30-4:00pm

Iowa Community Center,  
338 N. Iowa Avenue,  
Villa Park, IL 60181

630 834 8970

(Previous Tai Chi experience is required)

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September 29<sup>th</sup> ~ 10:00-3:30



847 842 1752

26402 Edgemon Lane,  
Barrington, IL 60010



Continued from page 17:

Natural World. Now, a study shared by Quartz not long ago points to the idea that the squat serves a metabolic function, much in the way that yoga does.

Dr. Bahram Jam, a physical therapist and founder of the Advanced Physical Therapy Education Institute (APTEI) in Ontario, Canada was quoted by the news source as saying: "Every joint in our body has synovial fluid in it.

This is the oil in our body that provides nutrition to the cartilage. Two things are required to produce that fluid: movement and compression. So if a joint doesn't go through its full range of motion if the hips and knees never go past 90 degrees the body says 'I am not being used' and starts to degenerate and stops the production of synovial fluid."

The health of our musculoskeletal system is integral to our wider health. A 2014 study published in the European Journal of Preventive Cardiology found that test subjects who exhibited strain in difficulty getting up off the floor without the use of hands, elbows, or legs for support (what is known as the "sitting-rising test") had a life expectancy that was three years shorter than subjects who were able to rise from the ground easily.

So with all of these health benefits to be gained, why are more people outside of Asia not squatting? Dr. Jam told Quartz: "It's considered primitive and of low social status to squat somewhere. When we think of squatting we think of a peasant in India, or an African village tribesman, or an unhygienic city floor. We think we've evolved past that but really we've devolved away from it."

Still, with all of the physiological well-being attached to sitting down in such a way, it would be safe to say that anyone who considers this position beneath them doesn't know squat.



# Calendar 2019

## August

- 2 Foot Washing, Labyrinth Walk & Singing Bowls  
- Starworld Martial Arts, Sierra Vista, AZ
- 3 Ki Gong Clinic  
- Starworld Martial Arts, Sierra Vista, AZ
- 3 Ki Gong Classes  
- Starworld Martial Arts, Sierra Vista, AZ
- 21 Blood Circulation Exercises  
- Bloomingdale Park District, Bloomingdale, IL

## September

- 4 Discover the secrets of Chinese Health Balls  
- Carol Stream Park District, Carol Stream, IL
- 15 Reiki Level 1 Class  
- The Lighthouse Center, Winfield, IL
- 18 Blood Circulation Exercises  
- Bloomingdale Park District, Bloomingdale, IL
- 29 Energy Protection

## October

- 2 Qigong  
- Carol Stream Park District, Carol Stream, IL
- 12 Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi  
- Relax 4 Life, Barrington, IL
- 13 Discover the secrets of Chinese Health Balls  
- Bloomingdale Park District, Bloomingdale, IL
- 13 QiGongBath  
- Natural Healing Centers, Tinley Park, IL
- 20 Reiki Level 2 Class  
- The Lighthouse Center, Winfield, IL

## November

- 6 Qigong  
- Bloomingdale Park District, Bloomingdale, IL
- 9 Healing Sounds & Health Balls  
- Relax 4 Life, Barrington, IL
- 7 Reiki Master Class  
- The Lighthouse Center, Winfield, IL
- 20 Blood Circulation Exercises  
- Carol Stream Park District, Carol Stream, IL

## Learning Lunches

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- The Six Healing Sounds
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- Stress Relief for the Workplace
- Falls? They don't have to happen to you
- An Introduction to Chinese Health Balls
- 50 Secrets of the World's Longest Living People
- Are You Ready? - A FEMA Disaster Preparedness Program



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## Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi

Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi is a Qigong exercise based on the philosophy of Tai Chi and extracts some of the best movements from Yang style Tai Chi Chuan and adds Qigong exercise.

It places emphasis on synchronizing the eighteen movements with proper breathing techniques.

It is a gentle, beautiful and flowing Qigong exercise routine that is both a joy to do and deeply relaxing.

It can be done standing, sitting in a chair or a combination, making it suitable for all ages and abilities.



This is an ideal class for beginners.

**Saturday,  
October 12<sup>th</sup>**

**10:00am - 3:30pm**

## Six Healing Sounds & Chinese Health Balls

It is said that there is one way of drawing breath in and six ways of expelling breath out. The six ways of expelling the breath are represented by sounds which resonate with specific organs.



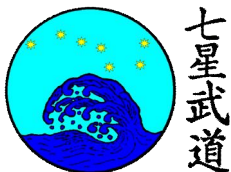
Practice of the Healing Sounds promotes optimal organ health, emotional balance, and helps us prevent illness. The sounds are so simple and easy to perform that they seem almost too good to be true, they work the first time, every time.

Discover the Secrets of Chinese Health Balls: why they can be so beneficial to your mind & body.

Reduce your risk of arthritis, rheumatism, dementia and more.

**Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>  
9:00am - 5:00pm**

CEUs available for Social Workers, Counselors, Psychologists, Massage Therapists, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Nurses, Nursing Home Administrators, Acupuncturists, Athletic Trainers, Dentists, Dental Hygienists, Dietitians, Nutritionists, Chiropractors, Respiratory Therapists, Marriage and Family Counselors



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To register call 847 842 1752    [www.relax4life.com](http://www.relax4life.com)

