



# TAKE A BREATH



Fire &  
Rescue  
Service



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news and  
updates



Your  
home  
oxygen  
service



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## Tai Chi – could it be for you?

Having come across Tai Chi in movies and once or twice seen people practising it when travelling, I have recently been reading about the health benefits and thought I would take a closer look at this unusual form of exercise.



*Photo courtesy of Taoist Tai Chi Society*

Tai Chi is an 'internal' Chinese martial art. It can be practised for both its **'defence'** training and its **'health'** benefits. It is also typically practised for a variety of other personal reasons such as to reduce stress, and to gently build up strength and longevity. As a result, different forms of training exist, which are mainly characterised by slow, deliberate movements.

The first time you come across Tai Chi you may be both intrigued and sceptical, particularly when they hear discussions of 'Chi' or internal energy!

### What is Chi?

Internal energy

Chi is always moving through a spiral field in the body in equilibrium within itself. Its flow is smooth and hardly noticeable until there is an obstruction. An obstruction may be felt as heat, tingling or pain. The energy flow will work on until it is dispersed.

*Taoist Tai Chi Society of Great Britain*

**According to the Taoist Tai Chi Society of Great Britain** the spiral movement of the energy flow is echoed by the spiral shapes that form the inside of our bones. These develop in response to the stresses imposed on them by the loads they have to carry. Tai Chi works on changing a large portion of the structure of our bodies by changing our usual movements and postures. This in turn develops a strong and supple nervous system bringing together its conscious and unconscious elements.

*continues on p2*

Whether you can identify with these theories or not, the fact remains that Tai Chi has become increasingly more popular in the western world over the past 20 years. The slow and meditative aspects of the exercises can help to offset the effects of today's hectic lifestyles. The careful movements can be used to improve fitness without causing any damage.

According to the NHS, studies have shown that Tai Chi can help people aged 65 and over to:

- Reduce stress
- Improve balance
- Improve general mobility, and
- Increase muscle strength in the legs.

In some people with COPD, Tai Chi has been found to improve their sense of wellbeing.

It is a low-impact form of exercise and doesn't put much pressure on your joints. Most people should be able to do it, even if they have problems with their health.

There are many instructors and weekly classes available in Scotland. In fact many Taoist Tai Chi Society branches offer 'health recovery' classes for those with particular health problems, or who are recovering from injury or illness. It is even possible to do the classes seated, or from a wheelchair if you use one. Their UK website has a class finder – and yes there are some available in the Highlands and Islands, including a 'health recovery' class in Inverness! So if you feel like trying something different consult your GP and give a class a go!

## USEFUL CONTACTS:

**Taoist Tai Chi Society of Great Britain [www.taoist.org.uk](http://www.taoist.org.uk)**

**You can contact the local Taoist Tai Chi Society branch on 07885 552852.**

**Your local council or library might also have information about other Tai Chi classes.**

# WHAT AM I?

How many clues to you need before you get the answer...?

1. My insides are soft and seedy.  
I make a scary face.  
Peter liked to eat me.
2. I flower in Autumn.  
My name is difficult to spell.  
I come in many colours.
3. I hide my winter stores.  
I have a curved, fluffy tail.  
I am a nimble tree climber.
4. I am fragile.  
I look like lace.  
My maker has eight legs.
5. I happen in October.  
I have become Americanised.  
A game of mine is bobbing for apples.
6. My anniversary comes in late autumn.  
I am associated with the houses of parliament.  
I go with a bang!
7. I till the fields ready for planting.  
In the Bible, swords were made into me.  
I save farmers a lot of time.
8. You'll see me more often at this time of year.  
I cover the leaves.  
I make water hard.
9. I make a crunchy carpet.  
I have wonderful colours.  
Deciduous trees lose me.
10. I grow in hedgerows.  
I can scratch.  
I make wonderful pies and crumbles!

Answers on page 6

Extract from *The Activity Year Book: A Week by Week Guide for Use in Elderly Day and Residential Care* by Anni Bowden and Nancy Lewthwaite, published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

# NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HOME OXYGEN SERVICE

National Services Scotland (NSS), which is the NHS department that looks after the home oxygen service in Scotland, recently got in touch to update us on some changes that will be coming soon.

The NHS has renewed its contract with Dolby Vivisol, the current supplier for home oxygen in Scotland, and they will continue to deliver this service. Much of the service will remain as it is, but there are a few developments that you should be aware of:

- Over the coming months you may notice some **new cylinders and equipment** being introduced. Your Field Service Engineer will ensure that you know how to use any new equipment.
- As part of the new contract NSS and Dolby Vivisol are delighted to be **improving the process for arranging oxygen for holidays**, or when away from home.
- They will also be in touch regarding **improvements to the electricity reimbursement** service over the next few months.

*'Both NHS National Services Scotland and Dolby Vivisol are committed to providing an exceptional standard of service and support to all our patients and carers'*

*Willie McGhee, Project Manager,  
Home Oxygen, NSS*

If you use oxygen you will receive a letter with some more information.

## HOLIDAY OXYGEN

By arrangement, oxygen can be provided free of charge to holiday destinations in Scotland and also to other temporary addresses throughout the UK. From 1st July all requests for new holidays should be either:

- Submitted by e mail to: [shol.dv@nhs.net](mailto:shol.dv@nhs.net)  
A relative or friend can do this on your behalf if you don't have access to email
- Or made in writing to: **Customer Services, Dolby Vivisol, North Suite, Lomond Court, Castle Business Park, Stirling, FK9 4TU**

Please provide full details of your holiday (page 18 of Your Home Oxygen Service booklet).

**You should continue to provide at least 3 weeks notice** in order to make your holiday arrangements, requests received with less than 3 weeks notice cannot be guaranteed.

**Don't worry if you have already sent a holiday request to NHS National Service Scotland!** All holiday requests that NSS have already received will continue to be processed as before.

**If you have any questions about these changes you can:**

**Visit [www.dolbyvivisol.com](http://www.dolbyvivisol.com) where there is a frequently asked questions section  
Speak to one of our advisors on 0800 833 531**

## HOW TO REGISTER

Don't want to miss the next issue of Take a Breath!? You can sign up to receive an e-mail alert that will let you know that the next issue is available, and a link to take you straight there!

**Visit: [www.chss.org.uk/takeabreath-highland](http://www.chss.org.uk/takeabreath-highland) for more information**

# THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - DOING MORE THAN YOU THINK!?

To most people, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service arrives to help people when there is an emergency, whether that is a fire, road traffic collision or in the recent severe flooding incidents across the country. These incidents are when the Fire and Rescue Service is most visible to the public.

In addition to this, as part of their commitment to building a safer Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service offers everyone in Scotland a **free home fire safety visit**. They can also fit smoke alarms free of charge if your home requires them. They have found that ill-health, living alone and limited mobility can put you at greater risk if there is a fire, so they are working with partner agencies that support people with additional challenges in their life, such as major medical conditions or severe mobility issues.



**Fact.** Every hour of every day there's a house fire in Scotland.

They were keen to let us know about some basic fire safety rules – how you can reduce the chances of fire happening in your home and protect yourself from a fire:

- Fit smoke and heat alarms. You can request a free Home Fire Safety Visit where firefighters come to your home and fit alarms for free if you need them.
- Test your smoke alarms regularly.
- Make an emergency escape plan.
- Establish a night-time routine, including having main door keys handy (on a hook near the front door is a good place).
- If you smoke – stub out all cigarettes and always empty ashtrays. Pour water over cigarette ends before putting them in the bin outside.

For a copy of a **free booklet** full of useful fire safety hints and tips call 0800 0731 999.

## To book a free Fire Safety Home Visit

- Text 'fire' to 61611
- Call 0800 0731 999
- Visit [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk) or
- Call in to your local fire station



## CALL FOR ARTICLES

Do you have some exciting information, an interesting story or a helpful hint to share with people affected by chronic lung disease? We'd love to hear from you:

**Lorna Stevenson**  
Respiratory Co-ordinator  
Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland  
E-mail:  
[Lorna.Stevenson@chss.org.uk](mailto:Lorna.Stevenson@chss.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0131 225 6963

## CHEST-A-MINUTE

**Q: What is a home fire safety check?**

A: You will get free advice from the firefighters, which reduces the chances of a fire starting in your home. You can also get long-life smoke alarms supplied and fitted free of charge.

**Q: How much does this cost?**

A: There is no charge. It takes around 30 minutes of your time to talk to firefighters and have free long life smoke alarms fitted.

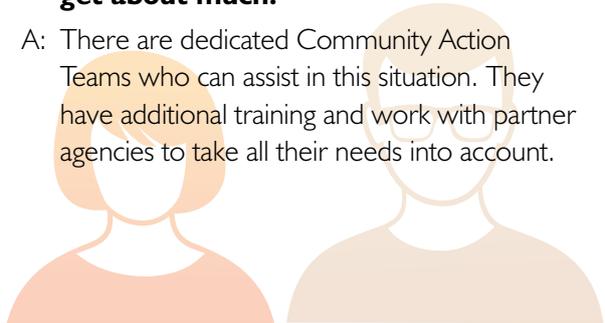
**Q: Do you make appointments for this service?**

A: Appointments can be made for a time that suits both the crew and you. But remember it is the

local fire crew who do the home fire safety visits so if they get called out they may turn up a little later than planned.

**Q: I would like to arrange an appointment for a relative who has a medical condition which means that they don't get about much.**

A: There are dedicated Community Action Teams who can assist in this situation. They have additional training and work with partner agencies to take all their needs into account.



## ANOTHER SUCCESS FOR THE CHEERFUL CHESTERS!

**On 30th May the Cheerful Chesters held a Coffee Morning which was extremely successful!**

After two hours of very hard work the Cheerful Chesters were rewarded by their treasurer announcing that they had raised the magnificent sum of £1900 plus!! Well worth all the hard work and very well done!

You can find out more about what groups are available near to you, and what they get up to by visiting the Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland website:

**<http://www.chss.org.uk/chest-information-and-support/how-we-can-help/support-for-you/chest-groups/>**



*'We had a few stalls.....cake and candy, bottle stall, plants, lucky dip, craft, silent auction and raffle. We had a great turnout of family and friends, and were well supported by our members, some of whom manned the stalls'*

*Maureen, Chairperson of the Cheerful Chesters*



**You may feel like you're still waiting for summer to arrive!? But all too soon it will be that time of year again.....time to book your flu jag (influenza vaccine).**

None of us want to think about winter just yet, but you need to plan ahead. You may not be able to get the flu jag while you are unwell so try to get it as early in the winter as you can, before you pick up any coughs or colds. And remember, last year's vaccine might not work against this year's bug!

The flu jag can reduce the number of flare-ups you have and reduce the chance that you will need to go to hospital. Some people worry that having the flu jag can end up giving them the flu. This is not true. The flu vaccine is called 'an inactivated injection', this means there is no live virus in the injection.

Getting your vaccinations is a free and easy way to help keep yourself well, particularly over the winter month.

**Ask you GP practice when they start offering the flu jag – this is usually between October and March.**

## DO YOU ENJOY A TRIP TO THE CINEMA?



Did you know that any one attending the cinema as a carer and has:

- Photo ID or proof of being a carer, or
- A CEA (Cinema Exhibition Association) card will receive free admission into the cinema!

### About the CEA Card

The CEA Card is a national card scheme. It is one of the ways for participating cinemas to ensure they make a cinema visit easier for disabled guests. In particular it ensures a free ticket for someone to go with them!

You don't need to have a CEA Card for a cinema to make your visit easier as cinemas still have to make reasonable adjustments. If you require a help to be able to visit a cinema because of your disability, cinema staff should be able to assist.

**If you would like to apply for CEA card you can go to [www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk)**

## Are you, or somebody you know, affected by a chronic heart condition like heart failure?

Why don't you take a look at our sister Newsletter 'Take Heart' which has lots of interesting information, exciting developments and helpful hints for people living with chronic heart disease:

[www.chss.org.uk/takeheart](http://www.chss.org.uk/takeheart)

You could also contact June Macleod at [june.macleod@chss.org.uk](mailto:june.macleod@chss.org.uk) for information about our heart failure befriending service and support meetings.

A Newsletter for people with heart conditions



**Chest  
Heart &  
Stroke  
Scotland**



# TAKE HEART

QUIZ ANSWERS: 1. Pumpkin, 2. Chrysanthemum, 3. Squirrel, 4. Spiders web, 5. Halloween, 6. Guy Fawkes Night, 7. Plough, 8. Frost, 9. Leaves, 10. Brambles



**FREE** calls to Advice Line 0808 801 0899  
or text **Nurse** to 66777