



# Poi and Wellbeing

Spin Your Health Around



# What Is Poi?

Poi is a ball on a cord which is swung in circular patterns around the body. Poi originated with the Māori of New Zealand, and it is believed they were originally used to train strength and flexibility, as well as being a form of entertainment. Today, people of all cultures, ages, and abilities are practicing poi as a form of play, performance, and exercise. At SpinPoi, we're passionate about helping people discover the joy and power of this Māori taonga (treasure), and how it can be used to keep the mind and body fit.



“ Practicing poi helps keep the brain alive. It’s stimulating. It’s fun. It requires complex actions that keep the body and mind engaged. Poi just might help delay the onset of diseases that strike in old age like dementia.

- Sir Richard Faull, KNZM FRSNZ, Neuroscientist, Distinguished Professor



# Poi's Proven Benefits

SpinPoi Founder and CEO Dr. Kate Riegle van West conducted a scientific study at the University of Auckland to measure the effects of poi on health for older adults. The double-blind randomised controlled trial found that after just one month of poi practice, participants significantly improved their grip strength, balance, and attention.<sup>1</sup> These are exciting results, especially when thinking about maintaining good quality of life as we age.



## Grip strength

Hand strength is an important predictor of bone mineral density, likelihood of falls, general disability, and overall mortality.



## Balance

Falls lead to 20-30% of mild to severe injuries, and are the underlying cause of 10-15% of all emergency department visits.



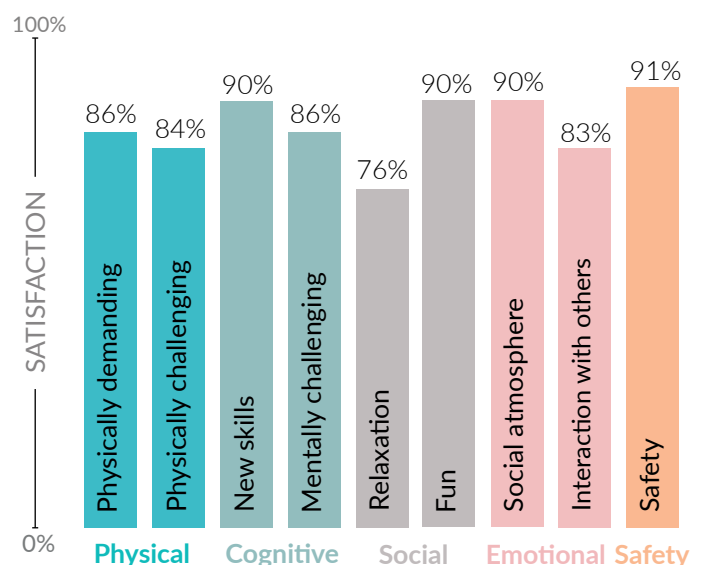
## Attention

Our ability to choose and concentrate on certain stimuli is necessary for every day functioning, from driving to holding a conversation.

Dr. Riegle van West conducted subsequent trials at the Auckland City Hospital and New Zealand aged care facilities. Data from staff and participants across all levels of care were collected. 93% of aged care residents (73/75 people) and 90% of hospital patients and (18/20 people) reported wanting to continue their poi practice.

“ I had cramps in my hands so bad I couldn't do anything, and after loosening it up with the poi they're as good as gold. It's done me wonders.   
 *Independently living resident, Ryman retirement village* ”

“ Poi could potentially be one of the most affordable and effective interventions globally to alleviate depression, loneliness and isolation in older adults. We have seen our older residents smile or laugh out loud, socialize and develop new friendships, and engage both their minds and their bodies despite their age and physical or cognitive abilities.   
 *Group Diversional Therapist, Selwyn retirement village* ”



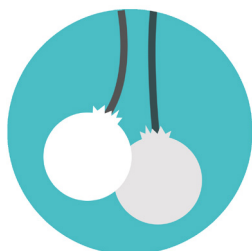
Satisfaction with Poi Sessions: Independently Living

n = 100

1. Riegle van West, K., Stinear, C., & Buck, R. (2019). The Effects of Poi on Physical and Cognitive Function in Healthy Older Adults. *Journal of aging and physical activity*, 27(1), 44-52.

# Beyond the Science

In addition to the scientifically proven health benefits, poi has a myriad of qualities that make it an excellent tool for keeping the mind and body engaged.



## Fun

Fun is an important quality for a therapeutic tool: if something is fun, you just want to do it! Plus play has profound health benefits.



## Adaptable

Poi is adaptable for all ages and abilities (e.g. poi can be heavy or light, done sitting or standing, with simple or complex movements).



## Cost Effective

Poi doesn't require complex equipment or technology, making it a cost effective solution for individuals and organisations.



## Creative

There are infinite possibilities for unleashing your creativity through making poi as a craft activity and exploring different poi movements.



## Body & Mind

The mind is like the body in that if you don't use it, you lose it! Poi has been scientifically proven to engage and benefit both.



## Social

Group poi classes provide social connections and camaraderie, which are especially important for combating loneliness as we age.



## Integratable

Poi is easy to integrate into daily life and into existing exercise and well-being programs as it can be done anywhere, any time.



## Māori Taonga

Practicing poi is an excellent opportunity to broaden our cultural awareness by actively engaging with a precious Māori taonga (treasure).

# People across the globe are experiencing the power of poi...

“ I had a stroke to the right side of my brain effecting the left side of my body. I just about lost all coordination in my left hand, but spinning poi has gotten my arm motion and finger coordination back in check. I can open and close my hand again, and move my arm all the way around in circles.

- *Misty*

“ Poi was an important healing force for me. It wasn't too physically demanding, yet it let me get range of motion and coordination at my own pace. It got me off the couch without hurting me, it cheered me up, it gave me a chance to laugh at myself a lot, and it was great for my confidence and mood. And SO fun.

- *Robbie*

“ [After learning poi] I noticed that my thinking had changed to a more positive tone and I felt my depression, stress and anxiety disappear. I also noticed my coordination improved, not to mention all the exercise I was getting on a regular basis.

- *Erika*

“ Now my bursitis in one shoulder is gone. My muscle memory, peripheral vision, coordination, physical exercise, stamina, and some chest and arm muscles have increased. Poi is also a great form of meditation. I will be a poi boy for life.

- *Neil*



# Ready to Spin Your Health Around?

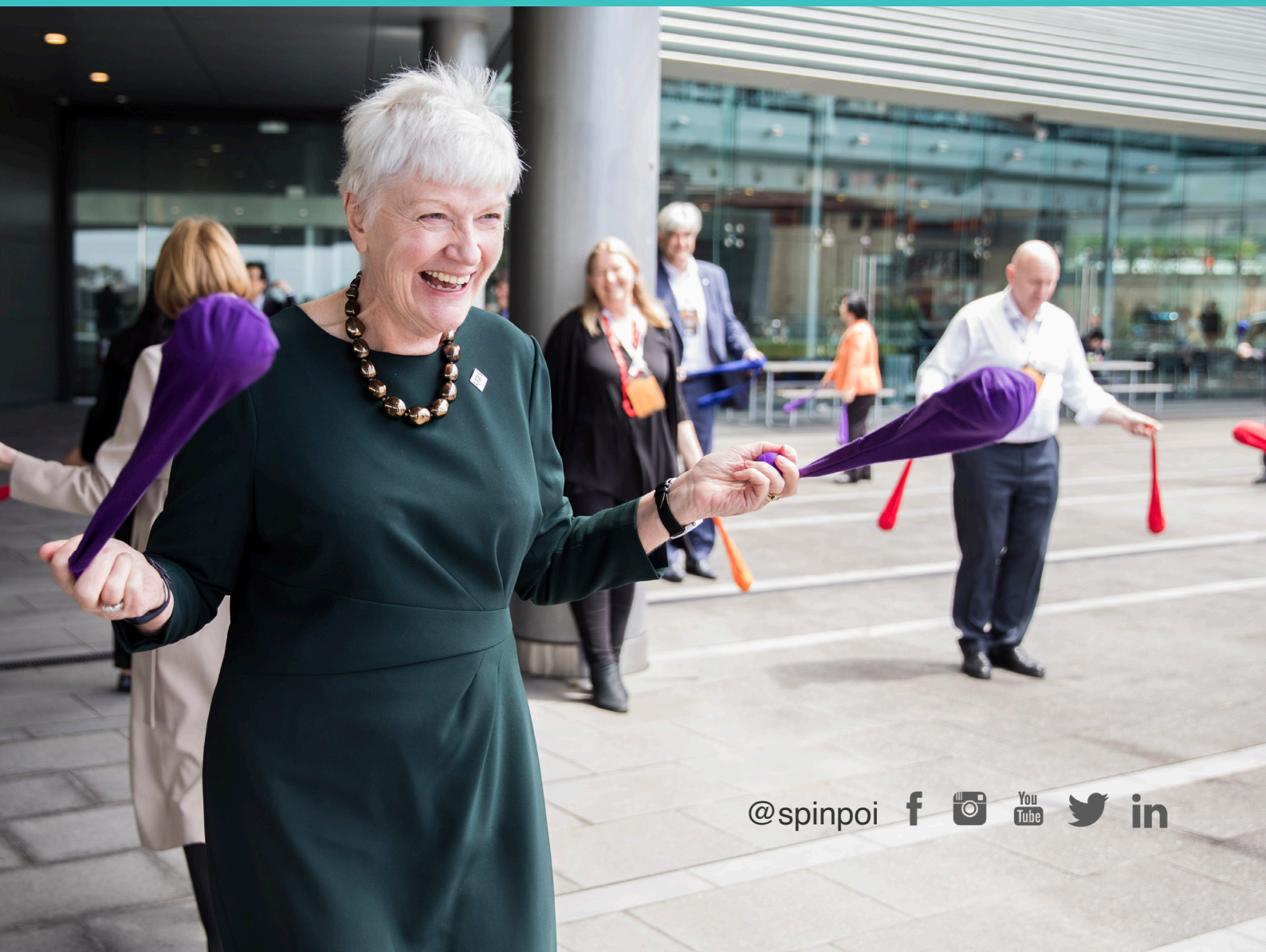
We offer a variety of resources to help you get spinning. These include videos which demonstrate how to make poi from things around the house, printable guides, and simple poi routines that will have you grooving to the beat. We also offer in-person and Zoom poi classes. For more information, visit [spinpoi.com](http://spinpoi.com) or send us an email. We'd love to hear from you!



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[www.spinpoi.com](http://www.spinpoi.com)



@spinpoi     

It's time for the world  
to follow New Zealand  
back to the practice of  
poi, and forward to a  
healthier future.

**Ka mua,  
ka muri.**

