



Learn How To Breathe Correctly!



Breathing is what keeps us alive and functioning properly. With stress, pain, anxiety, and changes in posture, our breathing can begin to be shallow. Instead of using the diaphragm to breathe correctly, you start to rely on your rib and shoulder muscles to breathe. This leads to tightness in the shoulders, neck, and upper back. The more oxygen in the body, the better it can function. By learning to breathe correctly you are promoting your health and can then share your knowledge with others.

When practicing diaphragmatic breathing, place your hands lightly over the front of the lower ribs and upper abdomen so you can monitor the movement you are trying to achieve. As you become accomplished in this technique, you will no longer need to position your hands on the body. Practice the following steps:

1. Gently position your hand over the front of the lower ribs and upper abdomen.
2. Exhale gently and fully. Feel your ribs and abdomen sink inward toward the middle of the body.
3. Slowly inhale a deep breath through your nose allowing the abdomen to expand first and then the chest. Do this as you slowly count to four.
4. Hold your breath at the height of inhalation as you count to four.
5. Exhale fully by contracting the abdominal muscles and then the chest. Let out all the air slowly and smoothly through the mouth as you count to eight.

Monitor the pace of your breathing. Notice how your muscles relax each time you exhale. You may feel warm, tingly, and relaxed. Enjoy the feeling as you breathe deeply and evenly. You should practice this technique so that controlled breathing automatically induces the relaxation response after several breaths. Once you are able to induce the relaxation response with controlled breathing, you can effectively draw upon this strategy when you need to be in control.

It is important **not** to do this exercise forcefully or too rapidly because it can cause you to hyper-ventilate. Hyper-ventilation precipitates dizziness and lightheadedness. If either of these occur, cup your hands over your nose and mouth and slowly re-breathe your exhaled air. These symptoms should subside. Then, you can continue the exercise less vigorously. Always monitor your responses throughout the exercise.

We are dedicated to helping you to live life to the fullest, free from pain and lack of mobility!

Call (561) 733 7677