

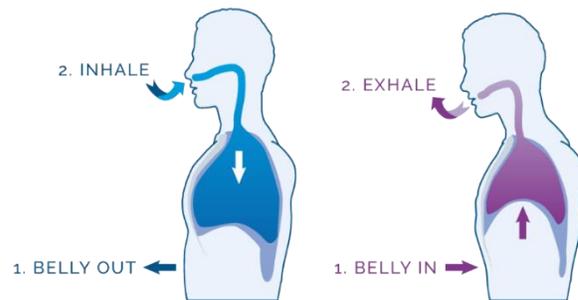
# Diaphragmatic Breathing

Diaphragmatic breathing is a form of deep breathing and meditation. Rather than breathing in a way that makes your shoulders rise, the purpose of diaphragmatic breathing is to pull the air down into the lungs by using the diaphragm. This action also helps increase circulation to the heart and increases the flow of your lymphatic system. All of these things improve your health, but the main purpose of the diaphragmatic breathing technique is to stimulate the relaxation response, which results in less tension and an overall sense of well-being.

We suggest you use this technique at least twice a day or anytime you find your mind dwelling on negative or stressful thoughts. It can also be useful when experiencing pain. The whole process takes about 5-10 minutes.

How to do Diaphragmatic Breathing exercises:

1. Place one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen. When you take a deep breath in, you should feel the hand on your abdomen moving outward, while the hand on your chest remains still.
2. Try to take a deep breath in through your nose and hold it for a count of seven.
3. Slowly let the breath out through your mouth on the count of eight.
4. Gently contract your diaphragmatic muscles to evacuate the majority of the air from your lungs.
5. Take another deep breath in through your nose and complete the cycle above for a total of five deep breaths.
6. Continue to deep breathe at a pattern of three seconds in and seven seconds out for the remainder of your 5-10 minutes.



It is only necessary to use your hands on your chest and abdomen while you are training your breathing. Once you feel comfortable, you can place them in any relaxed position. In addition, we would encourage you to explore guided meditation as an additional advanced technique for relaxation. This meditation can be thinking through Scriptures, reciting positive thoughts, inclining your mind toward the goals of peace or clarity, or anything else that relaxes the mind and encourages you toward rest. The more you practice these things, the more natural they will become.

One final note:

The best times to ensure that your body is in a relaxed state is prior to each meal and prior to going to bed. This will ensure good digestion and restorative sleep.