

Breathing to Reduce Stress

Did you know?

The way you breathe can contribute to stress, anxiety, panic attacks and fatigue.

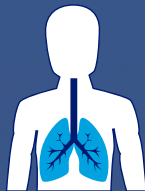
Breathe like this: 



Abdominal Breathing

- Even, deep breaths
- Lowers your heart rate and blood pressure while improving core muscle stability
- Helps you relax, lowering the harmful effects of the stress hormone, cortisol, on your body

Not like this: 



Chest Breathing

- Rapid, shallow breaths
- Causes increased heart rate, dizziness, and muscle tension
- Blood is not being properly oxygenated, which signals a stress response that contributes to anxiety

Try it out:

1

Sit or lie flat in a comfortable position. Put one hand on your belly just below your ribs, and the other hand on your chest.

2

Take a deep breath in through your nose, and let your belly push your hand out. Your chest should not move.

3

Breathe out through pursed lips as if you were whistling. Feel the hand on your belly go in, and use it to push all of the air out.

4

Do this breathing exercise 3–10 times. Take your time with each breath. Try to count slowly to 4 each time you inhale and each time you exhale.

5

Notice how you feel at the end of the exercise.