

BREATHING FOR BETTER HEALTH

Breathing, everyone does it but so few do it well. As we grow up and life's challenges are presented, many of us develop poor breathing habits that can lead to chronic stress and consequently poor health. Over time, we tend to develop short, shallow breathing patterns replacing the slow, deep belly (diaphragmatic) breathing that most (if not all) of us started with as children. However, it does not have to be this way, and by incorporating 10 minutes of breathing exercises into your day, you too will be "breathing easy" once again.

Check out these simple breathing techniques to get started:

1. Lie on your back with your arms at your sides and your eyes closed.
2. As you begin to breathe in, raise your arms towards the ceiling (elbows bent). Move your arms all the way up and over your head to the floor as you inhale.
3. Reverse the order and breathe out (exhale) slowly and smoothly as you return your arms to your sides. After you have done this several times, slowly inhale and exhale without moving your arms.

Deep Breathing - Provides extra oxygen to the blood and causes the body to release endorphins, which are naturally occurring hormones that re-energize and promote relaxation.

1. Slowly inhale through your nose, expanding your abdomen before allowing air to fill your lungs. If you are sitting/laying down or standing still, try deep breathing with your eyes closed.
2. Reverse the process as you exhale. Do this exercise for three to five minutes whenever you feel tense.

