



WELLNESS LETTER

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BREATHING EXERCISES

When we feel stressed, our breathing rate changes as part of the fight or flight response. Fortunately, we have the power to change our own breathing to manage this stress. Stress breathing is typically taking shallow breaths, disrupting the balance of gases in the body. Whereas relaxed breathing is deliberately taking deeper breaths in order to calm the nervous system. Relaxed breathing can have many benefits to our wellbeing, such as:

- increased feelings of calm,
- balanced oxygen and carbon dioxide in the blood,
- reduced cortisol (stress hormone) in the body,
- lowered blood pressure and heart rate,
- improved immune system functioning (defense against infection),
- reduced lactic acid build up in muscle tissue (muscle fatigue), and
- increased physical energy.



Heads Up

Some people find concentrating on breathing provokes panic. If this is the case for you, look for another way to relax. Some suggestions:

- yoga,
- tai-chi,
- music,
- art therapy,
- aromatherapy, and
- grounding techniques.



Resources:

Calm- guided and open meditations, sleep stories, plus mindfulness programs.

iBreathe- a simple app design to reduce clutter and evoke a centered experience.

Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art by James Nestor- this book draws from thousands of years of studies, great for skeptics, beginners and pros.



EXERCISES

three ways to breathe



DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING/ BELLY BREATHING

Encourages the body to relax

- Lie down and place one hand on your chest and the other hand on your stomach
- Breathe in through the nose and count in your head 1,2,3,4,5
- Breathe out slowly while lightly pressing on your stomach
- Repeat the exercise 5 times if you are able to



Box Breathing/ 4-4-4-4

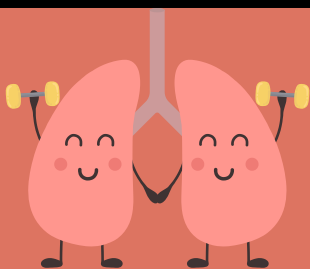
Improves concentration in tense situations

- Breathe in through the nose for 4 seconds
- Keep the lungs full for 4 seconds
- Breathe out through the mouth for 4 seconds
- Keep the lungs empty for 4 seconds

Pranayama/ 4-7-8 Breathing

Strengthens the connection between body and mind

- Breathe in for 4 seconds
- Hold breath for 7 seconds
- Breathe out for 8 seconds
- Repeat 4 times



Connect with LOMCC:



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