



Belly Breathing

What is it

- Healthy breathing moves through the body like a wave.
- The breath begins by expanding the belly and then moving upward through the chest. It is released by letting the air flow from the chest and then the belly.
- Belly breathing is slow, deep, and full; it helps us feel calm, grounded and stable.
- Shallow chest breathing maintains the stress response while belly breathing promotes the relaxation response.

How to do it

- When practicing belly breathing, put one hand on your abdomen and one hand on your chest, close or lower your eyes.
- First, breathe out fully. Then, slowly breathe in, letting your belly expand. Imagine you are gently filling up a balloon in your belly.
- Allow the breath to move up like a wave to expand the chest.
- Now let go, breathe out slowly and feel the wave ebbing; the balloon emptying and your chest and belly flattening.
- The more fully you exhale, the easier it is to breathe in deeply.
- With every breath imagine you are connecting to the universe.
- Breathe in relaxation, breathe out tension.
- Practice breathing this way for 5 minutes twice a day.

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Variation – Box Breathing

Box Breathing incorporates brief holding of breath after breathing in and out. This is very useful during severe anxiety or panic to slow down the breath and prevent hyperventilation.

