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REST POSITION OF THE JAW OR MANDIBLE

TONGUE UP, TEETH APART, LIPS LIGHTLY TOUCHING AND JAW MUSCLES RELAXED

The teeth should never be touching/resting together except occasionally they touch lightly with swallowing. I suggest that you closely monitor your jaw position during your waking hours so that you maintain your jaw in a relaxed, comfortable position. This involves placing the tongue lightly on the top/roof of your mouth wherever it is most comfortable while allowing the teeth to come apart, and relaxing the jaw muscles.

Often putting your tongue gently on the roof of your mouth like when you softly say "n" or "no", "never", "nothing" is a comfortable position. Lips should lightly be together as well. Then breathe through your nose. This rest position will help relax the muscles you use for chewing and clenching and help promote good nasal breathing.

DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

The diaphragm is a large muscle located between the chest and the abdomen. When it contracts it is forced downward causing the abdomen to expand. This causes a negative pressure within the chest forcing air into the lungs. The negative pressure also pulls blood into the chest improving the venous return to the heart. This leads to improved stamina in both disease and athletic activity. Like blood, the flow of lymph, which is rich in immune cells, is also improved. By expanding the lung's air pockets and improving the flow of blood and lymph, abdominal breathing also helps prevent infection of the lung and other tissues. But most of all it is an excellent tool to stimulate the relaxation response that results in less tension and an overall sense of wellbeing.



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DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING TECHNIQUE

Breathing exercises such as this one should be done twice a day or whenever you find your mind dwelling on upsetting thoughts or when you are experiencing pain.

- Place one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen. When you take a deep breath in, the hand on the abdomen should rise higher than the one on the chest. This insures that the diaphragm is pulling air into the bases of the lungs.
- After exhaling through the mouth, take a slow deep breath in through your nose imagining that you are sucking in all the air in the room and hold it for a count of 7 (or as long as you are able, not exceeding 7)
- Slowly exhale through your mouth for a count of 8. As all the air is released with relaxation, gently contract your abdominal muscles to completely evacuate the remaining air from the lungs. It is important to remember that we deepen respirations not by inhaling more air but through completely exhaling it.
- Repeat the cycle four more times for a total of 5 deep breaths and try to breathe at a rate of one breath every 10 seconds (or 6 breaths per minute). At this rate our heart rate variability increases which has a positive effect on cardiac health.
- In general, exhalation should be twice as long as inhalation. The use of the hands on the chest and abdomen are only needed to help you train your breathing. Once you feel comfortable with your ability to breathe into the abdomen, they are no longer needed.