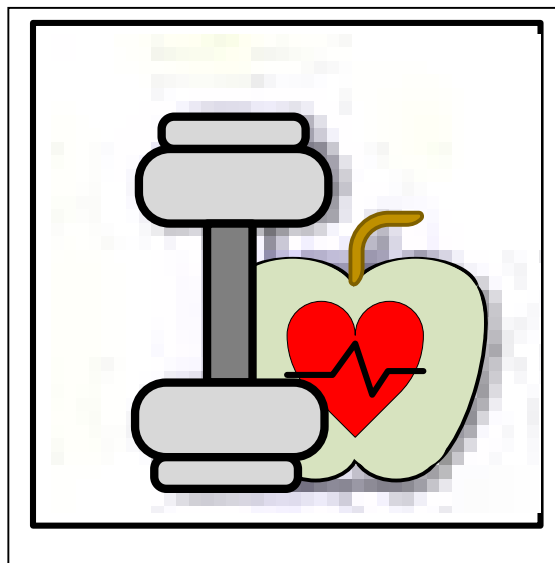


Lifestyle Change 3030

Week 6- Deep Breathing, Nasal Breathing, & Cold Plunging

Empower Your Health Journey and Lifestyle Change



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Week 6 – Deep Breathing, Nasal Breathing, & Cold Plunging (Shower)

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Week 6 – Important Points

6 Important Facts About Deep Breathing, Nasal Breathing, & Cold Plunge (Shower)

1. Activates the Parasympathetic Nervous System
2. Improves Oxygenation & Energy Levels
3. Reduces Stress & Lowers Cortisol
4. Enhances Lung Function & Respiratory Health
5. Improves Mental Clarity & Emotional Balance
6. Cold Plunging & Breathing Connection

Deep breathing isn't just about taking in air—it's about **resetting your body, mind, and health from the inside out**. Whether you're looking to reduce stress, sleep better, or improve overall health, making intentional breathing a daily practice can be life-changing.

Deep Breathing Exercises: The Benefits and How to Incorporate Them into Your Routine

Benefits of Deep Breathing:

1. **Reduced Stress and Anxiety:** Deep breathing activates the parasympathetic nervous system, helping to calm the mind and alleviate stress.
2. **Improved Focus and Concentration:** By increasing oxygen supply to the brain, deep breathing can enhance cognitive function.
3. **Lowered Blood Pressure:** Slower, deeper breaths contribute to reduced blood pressure.
4. **Better Sleep Quality:** Relaxation from deep breathing promotes more restful sleep.
5. **Enhanced Emotional Regulation:** Deep breathing aids in managing emotions and improving mood.
6. **Boosted Immune System:** Lower stress levels strengthen the immune system.
7. **Pain Management:** Promotes relaxation, which can alleviate chronic pain.
8. **Improved Lung Function:** Expands lung capacity and increases oxygen intake.

Incorporating Deep Breathing into Your Daily Routine:

1. **Morning Routine:** Start your day with 5-10 minutes of deep breathing to clear your mind and set a positive tone for the day.
2. **Scheduled Breaks:** During work or study breaks, practice deep breathing to reduce stress and enhance productivity.

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3. **Pre-Meal Practice:** A few deep breaths before meals can relax you and improve digestion.
4. **Bedtime Routine:** Use deep breathing to wind down and prepare for restful sleep.
5. **Reminders:** Set reminders or use apps designed for deep breathing exercises to prompt you throughout the day.
6. **Combine with Other Activities:** Integrate deep breathing into yoga, meditation, or while listening to calming music.
7. **Use Cues:** Associate deep breathing with daily activities like brushing your teeth, commuting, or waiting in line.
8. **Explore Different Techniques:** Try various breathing techniques such as diaphragmatic breathing, box breathing, or the 4-7-8 method to keep your practice engaging.

A Simple Guide to Deep Breathing:

1. **Find a Comfortable Position:** Sit or lie down with a straight back to allow full lung expansion.
2. **Relax:** Close your eyes, relax your shoulders, and place one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen.
3. **Inhale Slowly:** Breathe in through your nose for 4 seconds, filling your abdomen with air while keeping your chest relatively still.
4. **Hold the Breath:** Hold your breath for 4 seconds.
5. **Exhale Slowly:** Breathe out gently through your mouth for 6 seconds, feeling your abdomen fall as you release the air.
6. **Repeat:** Continue this cycle for 5-10 minutes, maintaining a steady pace and focusing on your breath's rhythm.

Techniques to Try:

- **Diaphragmatic Breathing:** Focus on deep belly breathing, expanding your abdomen more than your chest.
- **Box Breathing:** Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, exhale for 4 seconds, and hold again for 4 seconds.
- **4-7-8 Breathing:** Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 7 seconds, and exhale for 8 seconds.

Regular practice of these techniques can help you fully experience the benefits of deep breathing.

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Benefits of Nasal Breathing

Nasal breathing, the process of inhaling and exhaling through the nose, is important for several key reasons related to overall health, respiratory efficiency, and well-being. Here are some of the primary benefits of nasal breathing:

1. Air Filtration and Humidification

- **Filtration:** The nasal passages have tiny hair-like structures called cilia and mucus that trap dust, allergens, and other particles, preventing them from entering the lungs.
- **Humidification:** The nose humidifies the air before it reaches the lungs, which helps protect the delicate tissues in the respiratory system from drying out and irritation.

2. Regulation of Airflow

- **Slower, Controlled Breathing:** Nasal breathing naturally slows down the rate of breathing, which can improve oxygen absorption and promote a more relaxed state.
- **Better Oxygen Exchange:** The slower, more controlled airflow through the nose allows the lungs to absorb more oxygen, improving overall oxygenation of the body.

3. Nitric Oxide Production

- **Vasodilation:** Nasal breathing stimulates the production of nitric oxide, a molecule that helps dilate blood vessels, improving blood circulation and oxygen delivery to tissues.
- **Antimicrobial Properties:** Nitric oxide also has antimicrobial effects, helping to kill bacteria and viruses in the nasal passages, which can reduce the risk of infections.

4. Support for the Diaphragm

- **Diaphragmatic Breathing:** Nasal breathing encourages the use of the diaphragm, the large muscle at the base of the lungs, promoting deeper, more efficient breaths. This type of breathing is linked to better lung function, improved posture, and enhanced core stability.

5. Enhanced Cognitive Function

- **Oxygenation of the Brain:** The improved oxygen uptake associated with nasal breathing can lead to better cognitive function, including improved focus, concentration, and mental clarity.
- **Stress Reduction:** Nasal breathing, especially when combined with deep breathing techniques, activates the parasympathetic nervous system, reducing stress and promoting relaxation.

6. Temperature Regulation

- **Warming the Air:** The nose warms the air before it enters the lungs, which is particularly important in cold environments to prevent the respiratory system from becoming irritated.

7. Prevention of Mouth Breathing Issues

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- **Oral Health:** Chronic mouth breathing can lead to dry mouth, bad breath, and an increased risk of cavities and gum disease.
- **Sleep Quality:** Nasal breathing helps prevent sleep disorders like snoring and sleep apnea, which are often exacerbated by mouth breathing.

8. Improved Athletic Performance

- **Endurance and Stamina:** Athletes who practice nasal breathing during exercise often experience better endurance and stamina because of the more efficient oxygen delivery to muscles.
- **Recovery:** Nasal breathing can aid in faster recovery post-exercise by reducing stress on the cardiovascular system and promoting relaxation.

9. Enhanced Immune Function

- **Barrier Against Pathogens:** The nose acts as the first line of defense against airborne pathogens. By filtering and trapping harmful particles, nasal breathing reduces the likelihood of respiratory infections.

In summary, nasal breathing is important because it optimizes the respiratory process, enhances oxygen uptake, and provides numerous health benefits, from better immune function to improved mental and physical performance. Practicing nasal breathing, especially during physical activity or relaxation exercises, can significantly contribute to overall well-being.

Cold Plunging

Benefits of Cold Plunging

Cold plunges, or immersion in cold water, offer a variety of health benefits. Here are some key advantages:

1. Improved Circulation

- Cold exposure constricts blood vessels, which helps improve circulation as blood rushes to warm your core. Once you get out of the cold water, your body works to rewarm, boosting blood flow.

2. Reduced Muscle Soreness

- Athletes often use cold plunges to reduce inflammation and muscle soreness after intense exercise. The cold helps decrease swelling and flush out lactic acid.

3. Boosted Immunity

- Regular cold plunges can increase the production of white blood cells, potentially strengthening the immune system over time.

4. Enhanced Mood and Mental Clarity

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- Cold plunges trigger the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good hormones. This can reduce stress, improve mood, and increase mental clarity. Cold exposure may also lead to better management of anxiety and depression.

5. Increased Energy Levels

- Cold water immersion can lead to a surge in adrenaline, giving you an energy boost. It's a natural way to wake up and feel more alert.

6. Improved Recovery and Pain Relief

- Cold exposure is known to reduce inflammation, which can help with faster recovery from injuries and relieve chronic pain.

7. Better Skin and Hair Health

- Cold water tightens and closes the pores, which can make the skin look firmer and improve overall tone. It also helps keep the hair cuticle closed, leading to shinier, healthier hair.

8. Enhanced Metabolism

- Cold plunges can stimulate brown fat activity, which helps in burning calories. This can support weight management efforts and improve metabolic health.

9. Sleep Quality

- Cold plunges can help regulate your body's natural temperature, potentially leading to better sleep quality if done consistently over time.

10. Increased Resilience and Mental Toughness

- Regular exposure to cold can improve your body's ability to handle stress and discomfort. Over time, it can increase resilience, self-discipline, and mental toughness.

Cold Plunging with Your Shower

Cold plunging with your shower is a great way to ease into cold exposure without needing a dedicated ice bath. Here's how you can do it effectively:

1. Start Warm and Gradually Shift to Cold

- Begin with a warm shower to relax your body. Let the warm water run for a minute or two, then gradually decrease the temperature until it becomes comfortably cool. Slowly continue to lower the temperature until it's fully cold.

2. Deep Breathing

- Focus on deep, steady breaths. Breathing deeply helps you manage the initial shock of cold water and stay calm. Inhale through the nose for about 4 seconds, hold briefly, and exhale slowly through the mouth.

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3. Cold Shower Stages

- **First Exposure:** Start with 30 seconds of cold water, focusing on your legs, arms, and back first. Avoid dousing your head immediately, as that can intensify the shock.
- **Full Immersion:** Once you're accustomed to the cold, allow the water to hit your chest and shoulders. Finally, let it flow over your head and face if you feel comfortable.
- **Extend the Duration:** Gradually increase the time spent under cold water from 30 seconds to 1 minute, eventually aiming for 2–5 minutes.

4. Move Your Body

- Keep your body moving under the cold shower by shifting from side to side or doing light movements like shoulder rolls. This helps distribute the cold sensation and maintain blood flow.

5. Finish Strong

- Aim to end your shower with cold water for the last 1–2 minutes, regardless of how long you've been under. This ensures you get the benefits even if you start with warm water.

6. Post-Shower Warm Up

- After the cold shower, dry off and bundle up to allow your body to warm itself naturally. You can do some light exercises or stretching to generate heat.

Tips for Beginners:

- **Start Slowly:** Don't go directly to the coldest setting right away. Ease into it over a few weeks, gradually decreasing the temperature.
- **Shorter is Better at First:** Begin with shorter durations, like 10–30 seconds, and gradually extend as your body adapts.
- **Consistency:** Regular practice (a few times per week) will make cold exposure easier over time.
- **Mindset Matters:** Approach the cold with a positive attitude. Mentally prepare for the sensation, knowing that it's temporary and beneficial.

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Sauna Therapy

Benefits of Using a Sauna

Saunas offer a wide range of health benefits, including physical, mental, and cardiovascular improvements. Here are some key benefits:

1. **Detoxification** – Sweating helps remove toxins such as heavy metals and environmental pollutants from the body.
2. **Improved Circulation** – The heat increases heart rate and dilates blood vessels, promoting better circulation.
3. **Muscle Recovery & Pain Relief** – Saunas help relax muscles, reduce soreness, and improve recovery after exercise.
4. **Enhanced Cardiovascular Health** – Regular sauna use has been linked to reduced blood pressure and improved heart function.
5. **Boosted Immune System** – The heat stimulates white blood cell production, helping to fight off illness.
6. **Stress Reduction & Mental Clarity** – The warmth promotes relaxation, reduces cortisol (stress hormone), and enhances mood.
7. **Better Sleep** – The relaxation effects of a sauna can improve sleep quality.
8. **Skin Health** – Sweating cleanses the skin, opens pores, and can help with acne and other skin conditions.
9. **Increased Endurance & Performance** – Sauna use can improve heat tolerance and cardiovascular efficiency, benefiting athletes.
10. **Metabolism Boost** – Heat exposure may stimulate metabolic rate, aiding in weight management.

How Often Should You Use a Sauna to See Benefits?

- **General Health & Relaxation:** **2–3 times per week** for 15–20 minutes.
- **Cardiovascular & Longevity Benefits:** **4–7 times per week** for 20+ minutes (studies show frequent use is linked to lower heart disease risk).
- **Muscle Recovery & Pain Relief:** After workouts or as needed for soreness, typically **3–4 times per week**.
- **Detoxification & Immune Support:** **3–5 times per week** to promote consistent sweating and immune function.

Consistency is key—regular sauna sessions maximize the long-term benefits. Be sure to stay **hydrated** and listen to your body when determining session length and frequency!

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Videos on Today's Topics

3 breathing exercises for better health with James Nestor

<https://youtu.be/8qOMTqedPrk?si=gEmW2OEe0RBiidCA>

How to breathe through your nose | Nasal breathing techniques & benefits with James Nestor

<https://youtu.be/KdxvfWYN7s0?si=7IlkBzf8Ui1BFeon>

5 Ways To Improve Your Breathing with James Nestor

<https://youtu.be/f6yAY1oZUOA?si=RJslym36WYic8XxP>

Why 70% Of People Are BREATHING WRONG & How To FIX IT For Better Health! | James Nestor

<https://youtu.be/CFRQOnFDc5o?si=YVMRulRQrNb9XSFC>

The Benefits Of Cold Water Immersion for Your Genetics

<https://youtu.be/GhGSLffZd0E?si=ZSYn-2SL-TmHvxtz>