



# UNIQUE PERCEPTIONS

BALANCING BODY, MIND & SPIRIT [www.uniqueperceptions.co.uk](http://www.uniqueperceptions.co.uk)

Dr Claire J Bowen BM BS, B Med Sci, Cert.Hyp

## Basic Breathing Techniques

Improving respiratory function and oxygenation

### 1) Nose Breathing is important.

#### Why breathe through your nose?

When you breathe through your mouth, you only inflate the top area of the lungs, which is connected to the sympathetic nerve fibres (that activate the fight or flight response).

When you breathe through the nose, you're inflating the entire lung and lower lobes that connect to the parasympathetic nervous system. This calms the body and slows the heart rate.

Breathing in through the nose also aids humidification of the air we breathe in (i.e. preventing dryness of airways with subsequent problems) and also acts as a much better filter than mouth breathing - for bacteria and toxins from the environment, which are trapped by hairs within the nose. i.e. nose breathing is generally healthier and better for the body!

#### Resistance Training for Your Lungs:

1. Inhale through your nose for four seconds,
2. Hold your breath for seven seconds,
3. Exhale through tightly pursed lips, creating "back pressure," for eight seconds.
4. Start off with just once or twice a day - especially if this causes you any distress or difficulty.
5. Build up to doing this eight times, twice a day, everyday.

You must do this regularly for it to work, and it takes weeks for the body to adjust the 2,3 DPG levels (the way our blood transports oxygen). But your oxygen transport will get better and better over time. This method is 3,000 years old, and has 30 years of clinical experience behind it. It is an easy, cheap and effective method, and you cannot overcorrect and get too much O<sub>2</sub> through trying it.

**Basic Exercise:** try this exercise sitting, standing and lying down.

1. Exhale deeply, contracting the belly.
2. Inhale slowly as you expand the abdomen.
3. Continue inhaling as you expand the chest.
4. Continue inhaling as you raise the shoulders up towards your ears.
5. Hold for a few comfortable seconds
6. Exhale in reverse pattern, slowly. Release shoulders, relax chest, contract the belly.
7. Repeat.

This exercise will require gentle practice in order that inhalation and exhalation be smooth and balanced. Beginners should only do it 2 or 3 times continuously.



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## Seagull Deep Breathing Technique:

Breathing through the nose, this technique can be done standing or sitting.

- Interlace your fingers.
- Lift your hands, palms together and place the knuckles firmly under your chin.
- Keep the elbows together.
- Keep the knuckles to the chin throughout the exercise.
- Inhale slowly as much air as is comfortable; at the same time raise the elbows, like seagull wings, on either side of the head.
- Pressing the chin into the hands, do not bend forward.
- When ready to breathe out bring your elbows back to the starting position.
- Keep knuckles pressed into chin throughout the exercise.
- Up to 10 breaths if possible.

## Benefits of Deep Breathing Techniques:

Because of our lifestyle, most of us use little more than 10% of our lung capacity and as a result we are susceptible to all kinds of health problems. Breathing techniques such as the above help to service the other 90% of our lungs.

This exercise can be done before any kind of physical activity because it expands the lungs and increases circulation to the whole body. This helps by taking more oxygen into the bloodstream and preparing the muscles for action.

## Butterfly Deep Breathing Technique:

Stand or sit in a good posture. If standing, have your knees slightly flexed.

- Clasp your hands behind the neck, fingers interlaced.
- Inhale slowly through the nose, at the same time pulling your elbows back as far as comfortable, like the wings of a butterfly.
- Now as you exhale through the nose, bend slowly forward bringing the elbows back together and the chin to the chest.
- Begin inhaling again, pulling your elbows open and back until your butterfly wings are fully spread.
- Repeat up to 12 times, breathing slowly and rhythmically through your nose, expanding and contracting your chest with each in and out breath.
- Move gently at all times, without jerking your head or neck.



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## **Additional Breathing / Oxygenation Support:**

- Activated Oxygen Therapy - Breathing therapy which improves oxygen absorption, transportation and cellular efficiency: call 01299-833-972 for more information.

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