

Deep Breathing

There are many ways to practice deep breathing. Find one that works best for you.

For general health benefits

Set aside a few minutes each day to practice your breathing. Start with 5 minutes and then increase gradually to a goal that you find beneficial.

For dealing with cravings

When you have a craving, use this strategy to help you cope or get through it. Short quick breaths do not help with symptoms of withdrawal or cravings and in fact can actually make us feel worse. Try for 5 to 10 minutes and see how you feel and what happens to your craving.



Get comfortable

You can lie on your back in bed or on the floor with a pillow under your head and knees. Or you can sit in a chair with your shoulders, head, and neck supported against the back of the chair.



Breathe through your nose

Breathe in through your nose. Let your belly fill with air. Breathe out through your nose. Place one hand on your belly. Place the other hand on your chest. As you breathe in, feel your belly rise. As you breathe out, feel your belly lower. The hand on your belly should move more than the one that's on your chest.



Deep breaths

Take three more full, deep, breaths. Breathe fully into your belly as it rises and falls with your breath.



Close your eyes

Take a few big, deep breaths. Breathe in. As you do that, imagine that the air is filled with a sense of peace and calm. Try to feel it throughout your body. Breathe out. While you're doing it, imagine that the air leaves with your stress and tension. Now use a word or phrase with your breath. As you breathe in, say in your mind, "I breathe in peace and calm." As you breathe out, say in your mind, "I breathe out stress and tension."



Breath focus

While you do deep breathing, use a picture in your mind and a word or phrase to help you feel more relaxed.