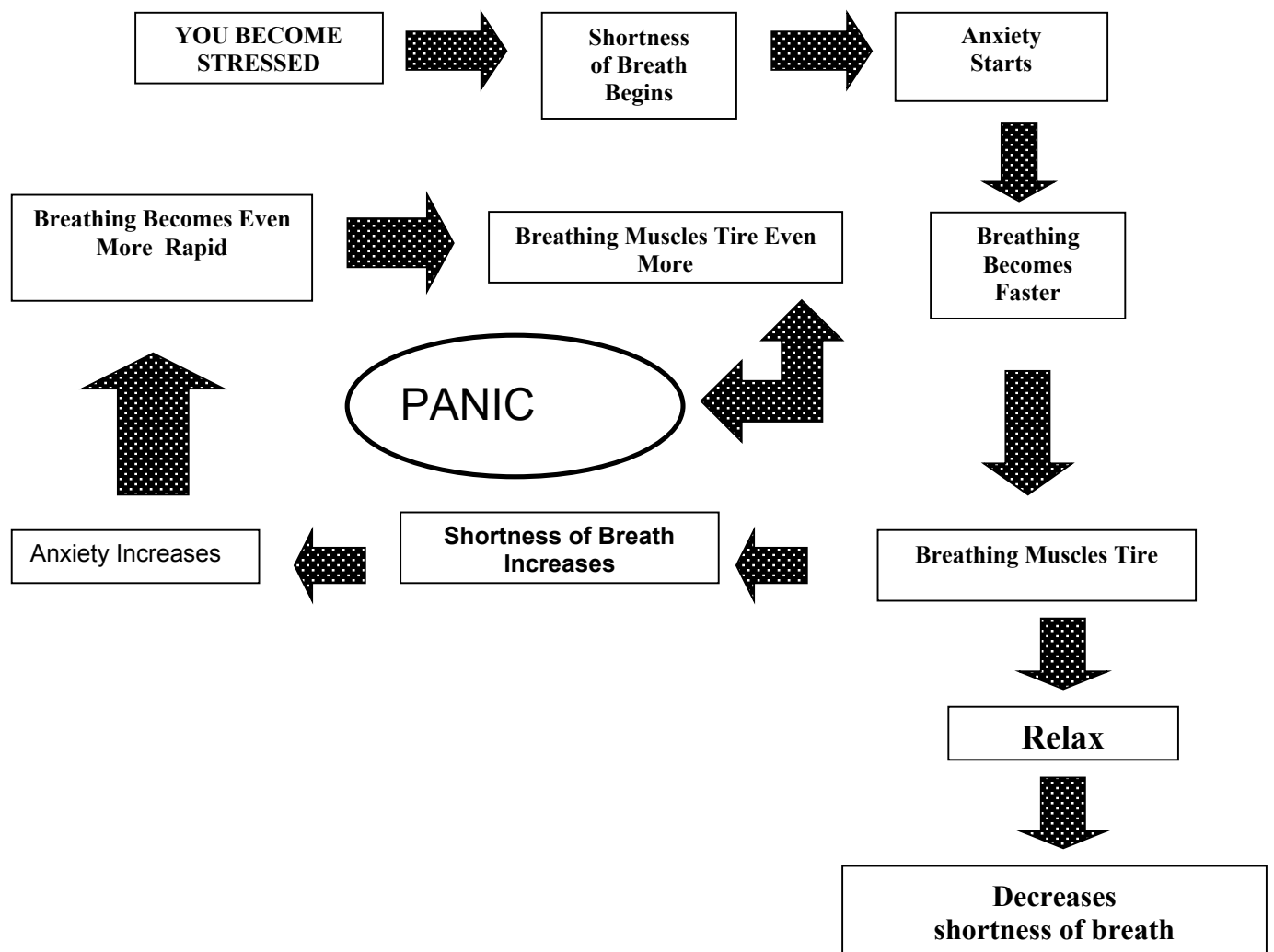


Asthma - Reactive Airway Disease

Control Stress

Respiratory Care Department

Stress can cause shortness of breath. When you start to feel short of breath, it's common to become anxious. Anxiety, "in turn", makes you breathe faster. Then you may start to panic. Learning to relax and control stress can help you prevent shortness of breath and avoid panic.



When Anxiety Takes Over

When you feel short of breath, your neck, shoulder and neck muscles tense. You become anxious and begin to breathe faster. Your breathing muscles tire and trap air in your lungs. Then breathing becomes even more difficult, and your chest may feel tight. Anxiety increases, until you may start to panic. The **key** to decreasing shortness of breath and avoiding panic is to learn to relax and to use purse-lip and diaphragmatic breathing whenever you start to feel anxious.