



Asthma - Reactive Airway Disease

Diaphragmatic Breathing

Respiratory Care Department

Diaphragmatic breathing helps prevent shortness of breath by increasing movement of the diaphragm. Normally, the diaphragm does most of the work of breathing. Relaxing your abdominal muscles as you inhale gives your diaphragm more space to move down and allows more air to enter your lungs. Tightening your abdominal muscles as you exhale forces more air out.

1. **Sit or lie down** in a comfortable position with your head supported and your knees bent. Relax your neck and shoulder muscles.
2. **Place one hand over the center of your stomach** and the other hand on your upper chest.

Inhale slowly through your nose to the count of two (2). You should feel your stomach muscles relax and move out. Your upper chest should stay still.

3. **Tighten your stomach muscles** exhale through pursed lips to the count of four (4). You should feel your stomach muscles move in.