



Asthma - Reactive Airway Disease

Learn To Relax

Respiratory Care Department

You can help control stress by avoiding things that trigger stress and by relaxing whenever you feel yourself getting tense. Find a quiet place and sit or lie in a comfortable position. Close your eyes and do diaphragmatic breathing (Please refer to Diaphragmatic Breathing) for several minutes. Also try the following:

- Picture yourself in an ideal place, doing something you really enjoy. Stay in that place until you feel relaxed. Return there whenever you start to feel stressed.
- Slowly tense, then relax, each part of your body. Start with your toes and work up to your scalp. As you breathe in, tighten the muscles. Keep them tight for several seconds. Then relax them as you breathe out.
- You can also relax by doing tai chi or yoga, meditating, praying, or listening to music or relaxation tapes.

Stop Panic Before It Starts

The key to controlling panic is to break the cycle before it starts. When you feel yourself becoming short of breath, stop what you are doing. Lie down, or sit and relax your arms and shoulders. Lean forward resting your upper body on your forearms. Start purse-lip breathing. Breathe in slowly and deeply, then exhale slowly and fully. Take at least twice as long to exhale as to inhale. Use a bronchodilator if recommended by your physician.