

Abdominal Breathing Exercise

1. Place your hand on your abdomen just beneath your rib cage.
2. Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose into the “bottom” of your lungs - in other words, send the air down as low as you can. If you are breathing from your abdomen, your hand should rise while your chest and shoulders should only move slightly.
3. When you have taken a full breath, pause for a second or two and then exhale slowly through your nose or mouth, depending on your preference. Be sure to exhale fully. *As you exhale, allow your whole body to just let go.*
4. Do ten slow, full abdominal breaths. Try to keep your breathing *smooth* and *regular* without gulping in a big breath or letting your breath out all at once. It can help to slow your breathing if you slowly count to four on the inhale (1-2-3-4) and then slowly count to four on the exhale. Remember to pause briefly at the end of each inhalation.

If you feel start to feel light-headed while practicing abdominal breathing, stop for 15-20 seconds, and then start again.

5. Extend the exercise if you wish by doing two or three “sets” of ten breaths.