

JUST BREATHE



Do you need stress relief more than ever? A yoga or meditation practice is a great way to manage ongoing stress and stay healthy. But it's helpful to have a near-instant calming practice close at hand, too.

Slow, deep breathing can have a profoundly relaxing effect on the mind and body. If you're like many people, your default is shallow breathing, or "chest breathing," which can be a response to stress and can also exacerbate stress. Deep breathing (also called diaphragmatic breathing or belly breathing), on the other hand, triggers the nervous system to relax. Here's how to do it:

1. Sit comfortably or lie down, and close your eyes. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other just below your rib cage.
2. Breathe in slowly and deeply. Feel your stomach push against your hand while the hand on your chest remains still.
3. Exhale through your mouth and feel your bottom hand move inward again.

Repeat several times for 5 - 10 minutes.