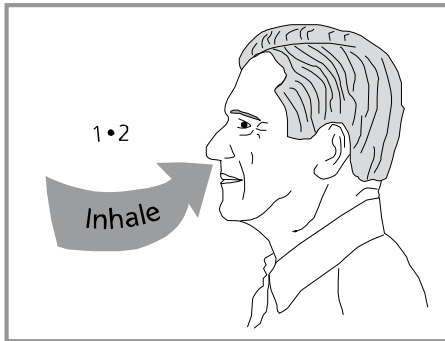


Living Well with COPD:

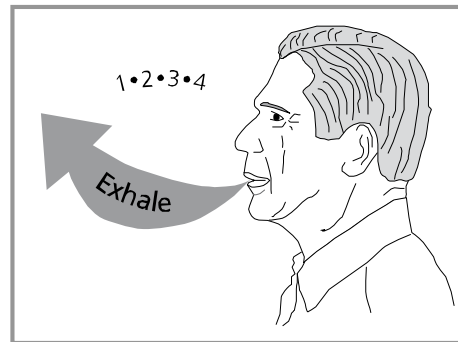
Skills for better breath control

Pursed-lip Breathing

Pursed-lip breathing helps you get rid of more old air when you breathe out. This makes room in your lungs for your next breath, which is full of oxygen. You can practice pursed-lip breathing any time you feel short of breath.



Breathe in slowly through your nose to a count of 2 or 3.



Purse your lips, as if you were going to whistle and let your breath out slowly.

Breathe out twice as slowly as you breathe in. If you breathe in for 2 counts, breathe out to the count of 4.

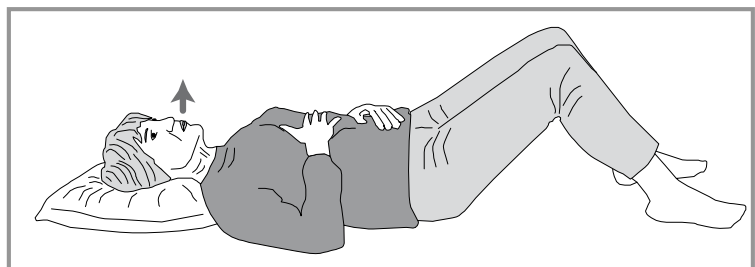
Remember: Exhale longer than you inhale. This helps empty your lungs

Belly Breathing (also called diaphragmatic or abdominal breathing)

Belly breathing makes your diaphragm work more efficiently. Your abdominal (belly) muscles help move the diaphragm and give you more power to empty your lungs. Many people like to practice this while lying down or sitting in a chair. After you've learned the technique, you can use it anytime.

First, try to relax the muscles in your neck and shoulders. Put one hand on your belly and the other on your chest.

Next, breathe in slowly and a little more deeply than usual, pushing your belly out. The hand on your belly will rise. Then, tighten and pull your stomach muscles inward, as you breathe out slowly through pursed lips. The hand on your belly will fall inward with your exhale.



When you feel the hand on your belly rising and falling as you breathe in and out, it tells you that you're using your diaphragm more efficiently to get air in and out of your lungs. The hand on your chest should move very little, or not at all.

Relaxation Techniques

There are many ways to relax. Some techniques work well when you're feeling tense or upset. Others work when you're starting to feel yourself losing control of your breath.

Activities: When you're starting to feel tense, try some simple, quiet activities that you enjoy and look forward to, such as:

- Listening to music or a relaxation tape.
- Playing an instrument.
- Working on a crossword or jigsaw puzzle.
- Reading a book or magazine.

Visualization: When you start to feel like you're losing control, take a mini-vacation without leaving your chair.

- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, using pursed-lip or belly breathing.
- Think about a time and place that you found pleasant and relaxing.
- Remember the details of the place: the temperature, sounds, and smells.
- You'll find yourself relaxing and feeling in control.
- Revisit your place whenever you need to.

Muscle relaxation: This technique can help you get control of your breathing and feel more relaxed. Practice this skill lying on your back or sitting in a chair with your back supported and your feet flat on the ground.

- Close your eyes.
- Start with a couple of rounds of belly breathing.
- Let the full weight of your body sink into the surface you're lying or sitting on.
- Feel your toes. Tense them. Then relax them completely.
- Feel your feet. Tense your feet and then relax them completely.
- Feel your legs. Tense your legs. Relax them completely.
- Feel your thighs and buttocks. Tense them and then relax them completely.
- Keep breathing in through your nose and out through pursed lips.
- Continue this with all the muscles of your body that you can control: your fingers, hands, arms, chest, shoulders, neck, and face.
- After you've tensed and relaxed each muscle, take in 3 or 4 rounds of deep belly breathing.

Focus on your breath and on your muscles. Don't worry about whether you're doing the exercise correctly. If you start to have negative or distracting thoughts, bring your attention back to your breath and your muscles.

For more information about breathing techniques

Visit the Health and Well Resources section of www.kp.org/wa. Under Conditions, diseases and symptoms, click on Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).