

COMPONENTS AND TECHNIQUES

Components

Posture (*'stand or sit tall and relaxed'*)

- Good posture and balanced use of breathing muscles is critical.
- Posture problems may worsen breathing problems.
- Longstanding breathing problems (like asthma) lead to posture-related breathing problems.
- Specific activities (i.e. certain exercises, sitting) or tension/stress, may worsen posture, contributing to breathlessness events.
- Increased posture awareness and practice helps stabilize and regain control of critical muscles.
- Consider complementary therapies that support posture and breath control such as massage, physiotherapy, chiropractic, yoga, singing, laughter therapy, or meditation.

See *Posture Awareness*

Air Flow (*'use your nose'*)

- Breathing through both your nose and mouth is critical.
- Practice taking deep breaths in and out first through only your mouth, then through only your nose.
- Practice nose breathing for a minute at a time. If this is too hard, start with a shorter time, and increase the time as you become more comfortable.
- Use nasal saline rinses (*at least once daily*)
- Consider an over the counter antihistamine (if allergies are a factor)
- Your doctor may prescribe a nasal corticosteroid spray to use daily.

See *Head Bob*

Breath Mechanics (*'use your belly'*)

- More efficient breathing is achieved when you activate and use your abdomen during breathing.
- This drops your diaphragm, increasing the space for air.

See *Belly Breathing*

Techniques

Posture Awareness

- Practice being self-aware of your posture and breath at various times in a day.
- Try family competitions to 'catch' each other slouching.
- Set a timer for a minute and practice for 'perfect posture' in various settings (while on your device, while running or playing a sport, during a meal...)

Head Bob

- Blow your nose.
- Breathe in through your nose.
- Plug your nose.
- Hold your breath and bob your head until you are 'air hungry' (out of breath).
- Stop plugging your nose, take a deep breath in.
- Most people notice it is now easier to breathe through their nose.

Belly Breathing

- Place one hand on your chest and one hand on your belly.
- Take several normal breaths in then out.
- Notice which hand moves more—chest or belly?
- The goal is for the belly to move while the chest stays calm.
- If belly breathing while sitting is difficult, try lying down.
- Try adding a weight such as a stuffy, beanbag, phone or even your hand.

Bring it Together

(stand or sit tall and relaxed, use your nose, use your belly)

- Set aside time every day to focus on 'Better Breathing' until your episodes are improved.
- *'If in doubt, breathe out.'*
- Breath awareness can help everyone and may improve concentration, relaxation, and sports performance.
- Practice, Practice, Practice, to make this your normal way of breathing.

Sniffing

- Take three short sniffs in, using belly breathing.
- Visualize the sniffs pushing out the vocal cords.

Yawning

- Make a giant yawn.
- While yawning, concentrate on keeping your tongue on the floor of your mouth