

## Breathing Techniques During Exercise

**Exhale** (on exertion) when your muscles contract (when lifting), and inhale when they lengthen as they return to the starting position (when releasing). It is understandable why this is so confusing because your muscles move your limbs in so many planes and directions. **THIS TAKES PRACTICE.**

1. **Pressing or extending motions** (moving the weight away from your body):

**Exhale** when you push and **inhale** when you return to the starting position. These movements include leg extensions, press machines, overhead shoulder presses, back and lateral shoulder flies, and tricep presses or extensions.

2. **Moving the weight toward your body:**

Exhale when you pull and inhale when the muscle is lengthening. These movements include **hamstring** curls, rowing motions (seated or bent over), **lateral pull-downs**, **chest flies**, and **bicep curls**. Much of our confusion over when to breathe out comes from not knowing which phase (contraction or lengthening) we are in when we start an exercise.

It is very important to keep breathing while you exercise. You should not hold your breath when lifting weights. **Even breathing in reverse is much better than not breathing at all.** Make sure you breathe throughout each repetition. If you are not doing that, your face may turn red and you will be out of breath by the end of the set.

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Source: California Air Resources Board. (n.d.). *Breathing and exercise*. Available online at <http://www.arb.ca.gov/knowzone/teachers/lessons/k-6/exercise.htm>

# Week 6 News

NEWSLETTER FOR THE EXERCISE AND NUTRITION HEALTH EDUCATION CLASS

## Staying Healthy with Exercise

We have been talking about ways to stay safe with exercise.

- Warm-ups and stretches are a must!
- Keep a slow and steady pace!
- Don't take your breath away!
- Remember to do cool downs at the end!
- Avoid getting too hot!



This week we talked about going to the grocery store and the foods we like to eat.



## We Talked About Things to Remember When We Exercise

It is important to make sure that we feel okay to exercise.

We should make sure that we have eaten and have taken our medications (if we are taking medications).

We should also make sure that we are wearing loose fitting and comfortable clothes.

## Breathing Techniques During Exercise

### TECHNIQUES FOR CORRECT BREATHING

- We should breathe through the nose. Take a breath through the nose.
- Our noses have little hairs that prevent dust, tiny insects, and other particles from reaching and possibly injuring the lungs. Use a mirror to look at the hairs in your nose.
- Our noses warm up the cool air before it reaches the lungs.
- Long deep breaths are better than shallow breaths.

### SIMPLE BREATHING TECHNIQUE

1. Take a deep breath slowly through your nose.
2. Hold the breath for a couple of seconds.
3. Exhale smoothly through your mouth.
4. Repeat several times.

### LYING DOWN BREATHING TECHNIQUE

1. Lie down on a rug or blanket on the floor with your legs straight and slightly apart, your toes pointed comfortably outwards, arms at your sides not touching your body, your palms up, and your eyes closed (relaxed body position).
2. Take a deep breath slowly through your nose.
3. As you breathe, your chest and stomach should move together. If only your chest seems to rise and fall, your breathing is shallow and you are not using the lower part of your lungs.
4. As you inhale, you should feel your stomach rising as if your stomach is filling with air.
5. As you exhale, your stomach comes back in, like a balloon releasing all of its air.
6. This inhale and exhale process should continue comfortably and smoothly.
7. Your chest and abdomen should rise as you inhale and fall as you exhale.
8. Repeat several times.

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## Breathing Techniques During Exercise

### THE RELAXING SIGH TECHNIQUE

Sighing and yawning during the day are signs that you are not getting enough oxygen. A relaxing sigh releases a bit of tension.

1. Sit or stand up straight.
2. Sigh deeply, letting out a sound of deep relief as the air rushes out of your lungs.
3. Let new air come in naturally.
4. Repeat this procedure 8–12 times whenever you feel the need for it, and experience the feeling of relaxation.



### DEEP, RELAXED BREATHING TECHNIQUE

Although this exercise can be practiced in a variety of poses, the following is recommended for beginners:

1. Lie down on a blanket or rug on the floor. Bend your knees and move your feet about eight inches apart, with your toes turned outward slightly. Make sure your spine is straight.
2. Place one hand on your abdomen and one hand on your chest.
3. Inhale slowly and deeply (counting to 10) through your nose into your abdomen to push up your hand as much as feels comfortable. Your chest should move only a little and only with your abdomen.
4. Continue Step 3 until it becomes rhythmic and comfortable. Now smile slightly, inhale through your nose and exhale (counting to 10) through your mouth, making a quiet, breezy sound as you gently blow out. Your mouth, tongue, and jaw will be relaxed. Take long, slow, deep breaths raising and lowering your abdomen. Hear the sound and feel your breathing as you become more and more relaxed.
5. When you first begin this technique, do it for 5 minutes. When you become more comfortable with it, you may extend it up to 20 minutes.
6. Upon ending a session, stay still for a few minutes and try to keep your entire body relaxed.
7. The purpose of this technique is to develop a good, relaxing breathing method. It may be practiced anytime, especially during stressful situations.

## How I Breathe When I Exercise

### BREATHING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

What to do:

1. Have a stopwatch this worksheet ready. You should have one worksheet per participant.
2. **Breathing at rest.** The participant is sitting down. The timer/recorder will give the participant the following instructions: "When I say start, begin counting your breaths. Breathe normally." Have another person count breaths with you. The timer tells the participant when to start. After 1 minute, the timer asks the participant how many breaths he or she has taken. Record the number on the worksheet.
3. **Breathing during physical activity.** The timer/recorder tells the participant, "When I say start, begin jumping jacks. After 15 seconds, I will say stop. Stop jumping and immediately start counting your breaths." The timer tells the participant to start. After 15 seconds, the timer tells the participant to stop jumping. After an additional 15 seconds, the timer asks the participant for a breath count. The recorder writes the number of breaths on the worksheet and multiplies it by 4. The timer asks the participant, "Were your breaths deeper while you exercised?" The recorder writes down the answer. Breathing is usually shallow and faster after physical activity.
4. Repeat Steps 2 and 3 until each participant has had a turn.
5. **Comparing results.** Discuss the variety of results. What other things could cause widely varying results (physical condition, respiratory illness such as asthma).

"Does a person breathe more or less during exercise such as jumping jacks?"

How much more or less? \_\_\_\_\_

Breaths in one minute at rest: \_\_\_\_\_

Breaths after 15 minutes of exercise \_\_\_\_\_ x 4 = \_\_\_\_\_

Is the breathing deeper after jumping? \_\_\_\_\_

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