



Caroline E. Dessens, PT, DPT  
1646 Military Hwy, Pineville, LA 71360  
www.RedRiverRehab.com  
Phone: (318) 443-9305  
Fax: (318) 443-3143

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## Diaphragmatic Breathing/Core Stabilization

- The diaphragm is the most efficient muscle of breathing.
- A large dome shaped muscle located at the base of the lungs.
- Abdominal muscles help to move the diaphragm, giving you more power to empty your lungs.
- The transverse abdominis surrounds your mid-section and directly attaches to your spine.
  - Facilitation of these muscles is critical to spine stabilization.
- Diaphragmatic breathing/core stabilization is intended to help you use the muscles correctly while breathing to:
  - Strengthen the core
  - Decrease the work of breathing by slowing your breathing rate
  - Decrease oxygen demand
  - Use less effort and energy to breathe
- Diaphragmatic breathing technique:
  - Lie on your back on a flat surface, with knees bent, and your head supported.
    - You may use a pillow under your knees to support your legs
  - Place one hand on your upper chest and the other just below your rib cage. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm move as you breathe.
  - Breathe in slowly, through your nose, so that your stomach moves against your hand. The hand on your chest should remain as still as possible.
  - Tighten your stomach muscles, letting them fall inward as you exhale through pursed lips. The hand on your upper chest must remain as still as possible.

Photo Credit: <http://c1healthcentre.co.uk/how-changing-how-you-breathe-can-improve-your-health/>



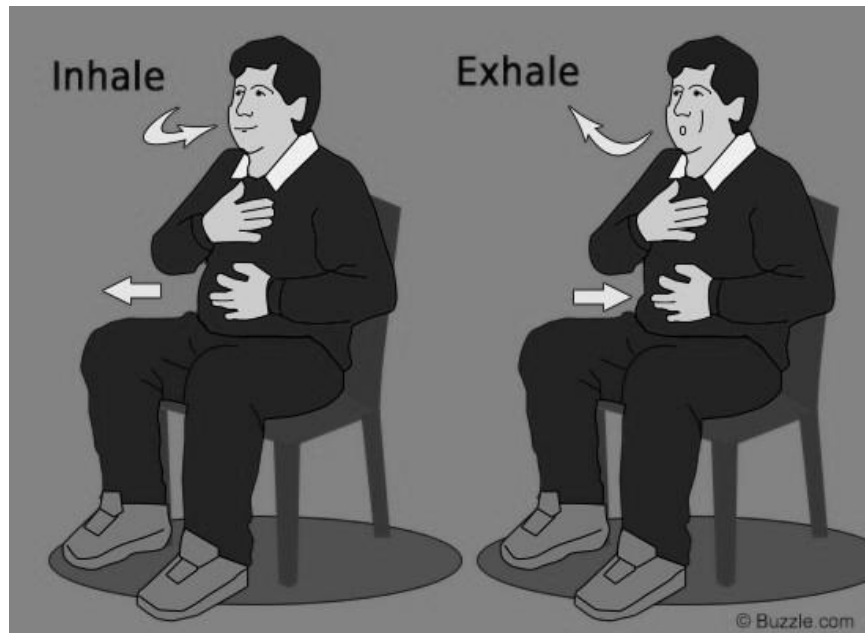


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- When you first learn diaphragmatic breathing technique, it may be easier for you to follow the instructions lying down. As you gain more practice, you can try the diaphragmatic breathing technique while sitting in a chair.
- To perform in a chair:
  - Sit comfortably, with your knees bent and your shoulder, head, and neck relaxed
  - Place one hand on your upper chest and the other just below your rib cage. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm move as you breathe.
  - Tighten your stomach muscles, letting them fall inward as you exhale through pursed lips. The hand on your upper chest must remain as still as possible.



❖ **Practice 5-10 minutes about 3-4 times a day. Gradually increase the amount of time you do the exercise.**