

# 6 Steps to Relaxation: Deep Breathing Exercise



Try this breathing exercise to help improve your emotional and physical health.

1

Lie on your back to help shift your breathing to a deeper, abdominal breath.



2

Put your hands on your belly and take a deep breath through your mouth or nose. Each time you breathe in, try to push your belly out as much as possible—feel your hands rise as the belly rises. (As opposed to the popular notion that when you take a deep breath you suck in your gut.)



3

Hold that breath for a few seconds and then slowly exhale through your mouth. Try to imagine you're exhaling through a straw.



4

After that deep breath, take three or four normal breaths.



5

Then take another deep breath.



6

Continue this for 5 to 10 minutes.



While you're still learning, try to practice this form of relaxation during an already quiet time, when you're least stressed.

## Relaxation/Meditation Resource

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### National Institutes of Health

<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/meditation/overview.htm>

## Additional Resources

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### Center for Workplace Mental Health

<http://workplacementalhealth.org>

### National Institute of Mental Health

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help/index.shtml>

### National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

<http://www.nami.org>

### Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

<https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov>

### Mental Health.gov

<https://www.mentalhealth.gov>

### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

### National Council for Behavioral Health

<https://www.thenationalcouncil.org>

### Veterans & Families – Mental Health Resources

<https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov>

### National Institutes of Health (NIH)

### National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH)

<https://nccih.nih.gov/health/stress>