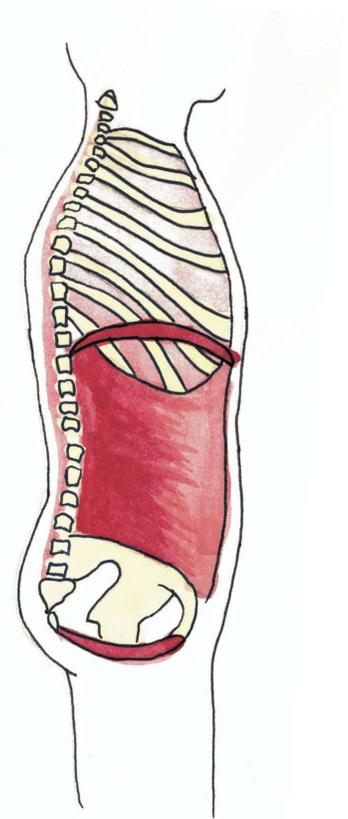


Diaphragmatic Breathing

The diaphragm is the most efficient muscle of breathing. It is a large, dome-shaped muscle located at top of the abdominal cavity. Practicing diaphragmatic breathing can help you calm the nervous system, release and lengthen the pelvic floor musculature and can aid in restoration of control of the deep core system.

Diaphragmatic breathing technique

- 1.** Lie on your back on a flat surface or in bed, with your knees slightly bent and your head supported. You can 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 on the belly. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm move as you breathe.
- 2.** Breathe in slowly through your nose so that your stomach moves out against your hand. Let the abdomen rise, as if a balloon was filling with air. The hand on your chest should remain as still as possible. Feel your pelvic floor muscles soften and relax.
- 3.** Exhale through the mouth slowly. The abdomen will lower as a balloon would deflate. The hand on your upper chest should remain as still as possible. Feel your pelvic floor muscles return to a resting state.



As you gain more practice, you can try the diaphragmatic breathing technique while sitting, standing, in child's pose, in happy baby pose, in a supported squat position, or during normal activity.

How often should I practice this exercise?

Practice this exercise 5-10 minutes about 1-2 times per day, once in the morning and once before going to bed. You can progress to performing it 3-4 times a day and as often as possible.