



## **STOP! BREATHE!**

Right Now, this very moment, you are increasing your aging process, increasing your risk for heart attack and stroke and increasing your risk of many other illnesses. So, STOP! Stop? Yes, and BREATHE. That's right, breathe. Take a big, deep breath. Not the breaths you take when you are startled or nervous, not that shallow puffing you are probably doing right now - A BIG, DEEP, LUNG FILLING, DIAPHRAGM EXPANDING BREATH.

You're asking 'why?' aren't you? I already told you why: To slow down the aging process and your risk of heart attack, stroke, and other illnesses. Can you believe it could be that simple? It is.

Breathing relieves stress. The next time you feel nervous or anxious take a moment and use all of that oxygen around you. Take it in, and then let it out slowly. You'll be surprised at the resulting calm.

Now, slowing those processes I mentioned before will take a little more time, but the results will be worth it. Our daily lives are the cause of these processes. Here's what's going on. We run around and stack stress on top of stress on top of anxiety on top of more stress. All of this stress produces the stress hormone, Cortisol. Cortisol is produced to aid in the fight or flight response (which is a good thing), but the continual stress we carry around puts the Cortisol in overdrive and then it gets nasty. It becomes little Pac Men running through your body chomping up all of the good stuff. Yes, the good stuff; all that good eating and sleeping and exercise you've been doing are being sabotaged by Cortisol.

When you are ready to stop the negative reactions this process (stress) can have on you, take a DEEP BREATH. Begin by sitting or standing with a lifted rib cage; inhaling through your nose fill the diaphragm with oxygen. Allow the lungs to fill completely. Slowly release the air through your nose. Be sure to expel all of the stale air. Repeat as many times during the day as you like; a 20 minute session will aid in the reduction of Cortisol.

Our lives are full of stress; some is self inflicted, some is just the nature of life. But to know we have the ability to stop its negative affects on our health is a stress reliever in and of itself. Incorporating this new exercise is easy because you can do it anywhere at anytime!

Right now, this very moment, you can begin decreasing your aging process, decreasing your risk for heart attack and stroke and decreasing your risk of many other illnesses.

*So what are you waiting for?*

**TAKE ACTION NOW: STOP! And BREATHE!**

## Find out Your Breathing Volume

This is fun...it is a test that measures your breathing volume. You hear me tell you all the time to breathe...and breathe deep. There is a reason why your body needs oxygen and why it is important to breathe it in fully and to exhale fully.

The combined benefits of increased breathing volume (the amount of O<sup>2</sup> you take in) and breathing with ease PLUS extra oxygen absorption into the blood cells strengthens EVERY healthy biochemical reaction in the human body such as:

- Kills germs, viruses, bacteria, fungi and yeast
- Enhances oxygen to the brain
- Increases vitality
- Strengthens the benefits of sleep
- Speeds recovery times from stress, illness and trauma
- Neutralizes free-radicals
- Heals wounds
- Calms the nervous system
- Improves attention and concentration skills
- Enhances the body's waste treatment systems in the lungs, liver, kidneys, bladder, colon and lymphatic system

Wow! Simply breathing is extremely beneficial. Your thought may be that you have no problem with that. You would be surprised to hear that most breathe from the upper chest cavity and rarely take in a full breath.

Here is a test for you to measure how you rate with breathing volume.

Warm up the lungs by taking several deep breaths then exhale the air forcefully to release the stale air; do this several times. Before beginning the exercise, close your eyes and take 2-3 relaxed breaths. Now you are ready to begin.

**The test:** Take a deep breath in; bring in as much oxygen as possible, fill every nook and cranny of the diaphragm and lungs with oxygen. Begin counting as fast as you can, out loud, while you hold your breath and slowly release the volume in the lungs. Do this exercise 2 -3 times to get an accurate count. The goal is to get to a high count. Next, check how you score below.

### Number Count Skill Categories

150+	2%	Excellent
110-149	5%	Very Good
90-109	10%	Good
60-89	35%	Fair
4-59	47%	Poor

How do you fare?

Here is an interesting note from Michael Grant White, NCLMBT, NE, Optimal Breathing Development Master Trainer, “The number count ranges above were determined by statistical analysis of the average number of diagnosed illnesses correlating with that score range. As the number count score worsens, the average number of illnesses increases. “

So in essence, lung capacity plays a major role in the body’s ability to take care of its self.

If you are doing a form of daily exercise, you are on the right path. If not, get started walking today, or jumping on a mini tramp 5 min at a time. Start slow and gradually build up to 20-30 min 3-4 times a week.

If you would like alternative ways to build up your volume, I suggest a form of meditative exercise to help you reduce stress, manage stress and anxiety, something like yoga or qi gong, [mindscape](#) and [bodytalk](#).

When you have questions about any of these modalities, please feel free [to contact me](#) and I can help direct you in finding the best program for you.

Ashly

Reference: Michael Grant White, NCLMBT, NE, Optimal Breathing Development Master Trainer