

# Breathing in the context of persistent pain

Retrain your Breathing in a way that will nourish your body.

Even though our nervous system regulates itself automatically, we CAN have a direct influence on it. Breathing is one tool we have that can influence the state of our nervous system. Breathing is most often automatic, meaning that we breathe without thinking. We can also influence our breathing, which in turn influences are automatic state. If you practice retraining your natural breath, over time you can influence the way you automatically breathe. Natural breathing will help create a sense of safety and likely, your brain will determine we need less pain protection

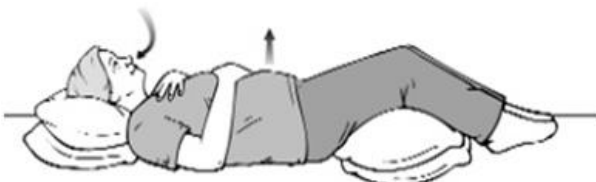
## Diaphragmatic Breathing/ Natural Breathing

A useful skill to calm your nervous system in preparation for a medical procedure or for managing daily stressors – like pain

1. Place one hand on the centre of your chest and the other on the middle abdomen below the rib cage.
2. Breathe through your nose.
3. As you inhale, the lower rib cage will expand and the abdomen will rise.
4. As you exhale, the opposite will occur.
5. There should be little movement of the upper chest.
6. By practicing diaphragmatic breathing, it will become habitual and automatic.

### NEXT

1. Breathe comfortably with the diaphragm without sound or pause.
2. Inhalation and exhalation should be the same number of seconds.
3. Watch the stream of your breath. You do not have to search for any other object to concentrate on.
4. As you watch your breath, your mind will find a moment of calm.



## Ideas for digital resources for Breathing

How to do diaphragmatic breathing (3 minute YouTube video):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ua9bOsZTYg>

BellyBio App: an app to help you learn to regulate your breathing.

A breathing exercise: <https://lifeisnow.ca/sections/step-2-breathing/>