

Exercise Prescription: Diaphragmatic Breathing

Purpose of Exercise:

Improper breathing is one of the main dysfunctions found when the body is under stress or in pain. The purpose of diaphragmatic breathing is to emphasize activation of the primary breathing muscles while de-emphasizing activation of the secondary breathing muscles.

Starting Position:

Laying down on your back, your knees can be straight or bent.

Exercise Description:

Place one hand over your belly, and the other one your chest. Taking slow, deep breaths. The hand on the chest SHOULD NOT rise or fall. Attempt to push your bottom ribs out to the side as you inhale.

Steps:

1. Belly rises first. Imagine you are blowing your belly up like a balloon.
2. Push your bottom ribs out to the side.
3. Breathe into your pelvis. Find the bony bits on the front of your pelvis and sink your fingers into the soft tissue on the inside. Make sure your fingers rise as you breathe deep down into your pelvis, contracting your core muscles.