

UBA
WellnessWorks

Sensible health and wellness concepts for employees



Exhale For Stress Relief



Changing how you are breathing can change the way you feel. In a recent [Harvard Business Review](#) article Emma Seppälä, Ph.D. of Yale explained why breathing is so powerful for stress reduction. Understanding why your body responds to a change in your breathing patterns can turn your feelings of overwhelm into a calmer, more relaxed state. Additionally, learning a simple [4-7-8 breathing practice](#) can empower you to call upon your inner yogi during moments of tension.

Science shows that certain breathing patterns correspond with different feelings. A nerve-racking encounter (an uncomfortable client meeting or difficult conversation with your boss) can leave you feeling panicked, angry, or anxious in the moment. Behind the scenes, your body raises an alarm telling your nervous system that something has gone awry. In real time, you can feel your palms start to sweat, your heart race, and your breath quicken. Many people look outward for a solution to their distress but are not at their cognitive best in these moments because their logic is impaired. Instead, start by looking inward. These short, quick, irregular breaths you are experiencing are associated with a stress response. Changing your breathing can literally change how you react in the moment.

Like an orchestra conductor, your breathing patterns tells your body what notes to play, and your body responds accordingly. A series of longer exhalations send a message to your heart to slow down, mirroring a natural state of calm. The slow exhalations also engage a part of your parasympathetic nervous system called the vagus nerve. Your parasympathetic system owns “rest and digestion” related activities (in opposition to the sympathetic system that is known for its “fight or flight” response). In essence, your vagus nerve tells your body to put on the brakes.



Instead of waiting for calm to “find” you, you can lead your body to a calmer state by engaging in a simple breathing pattern mimicking a restful state. A relatively simple exercise you can try is the 4-7-8 breathing technique. This short technique is often prescribed to those having trouble falling asleep. The only thing you need to know how to do is count! Start by inhaling through your nose for four seconds. Then, hold your breath for seven counts. And finally, exhale through your mouth for eight counts. It is as simple as that! By practicing this technique regularly, you can be ready for those stressful moments.

This newsletter contains general health and financial wellness information and is not a substitute for your doctor's care. You should consult an appropriate health care professional for your specific needs. Some treatments mentioned in this newsletter may not be covered by your health plan. Please refer to your benefit plan documents for information about coverage.

Spring Vegetable Sauté Makes 4 servings

Bursting with delicious spring flavors, this delicious sauté is perfect with a side of roasted chicken, fish, or tofu.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tsp. olive oil
- ½ cup sweet onion (sliced)
- 1 garlic clove (finely chopped)
- 3 small new potatoes (quartered)
- ¾ cup carrot (sliced)
- ¾ cup asparagus pieces
- ¾ cup sugar snap peas or green beans
- ½ cup radishes (quartered)
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. dried dill



NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

- Total calories: 138
- Total fat: 1 g
- Protein: 4 g
- Sodium: 177 mg
- Carbohydrate: 29 g
- Dietary fiber: 5 g
- Saturated fat: 0 g
- Total sugars: 4 g

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a skillet. Cook the onion for two minutes, add the garlic and cook another minute.
2. Stir in the potatoes and carrots. Cover and turn the heat to low. Cook until almost tender, about four minutes.

3. If the vegetables start to brown, add 1-2 Tbsp. of water.
4. Add the asparagus, peas, radishes, salt, black pepper and dill. Cook, stirring often, until just tender for about four minutes more.
5. Serve immediately.

Source: [MyPlate](#)