

Do You Know How to Breathe Properly?

This may seem an odd question, of course you know how to breathe, you're still here so you must be doing something right! Well, yes and no...when we are born we breathe properly i.e. using the full capacity of the lungs and taking the breath into the abdomen but as we get older our breathing can become more shallow and we forget to breathe into the abdomen.

Try it right now, take a moment to be still and observe how you breathe.

- Do you breathe with your nose, mouth or a combination?
- As you inhale does your tummy or your chest expand?

If we are breathing optimally we should be breathing in and out through the nose and as we inhale the abdomen expands slightly and as we exhale it relaxes. Approximately 85% of the population do not use the abdomen when breathing, which means they are only using about a third of their lung capacity and you may be surprised to learn that continued breathing with the mouth can lead to raised anxiety levels.

At Inside Out we are on a mission to get the nation breathing properly because we understand the huge benefits to be gained! We can help you:

- ✓ Increase lung capacity
- ✓ Strengthen lungs and build stamina
- ✓ Improve conditions such as asthma
- ✓ Learn to control "over breathing" eg. Anxiety / panic attacks, hyperventilation
- ✓ Help you manage COPD or recover from pneumonia
- ✓ Reduce occurrence of coughs, colds and bronchitis

Not only can you benefit from all this but breathing properly positively effects many other functions of the body!

- ✓ Breathing into the abdomen massages the intestines so digestion is improved.
- ✓ Circulation is improved, oxygen is more efficiently transported to all parts of the body
- ✓ Core muscles are naturally toned
- ✓ Abdominal bloating is reduced
- ✓ Skin looks healthier as toxins are cleared more efficiently and skin cells are oxygenated – the ultimate in anti-ageing!
- ✓ Reduce occurrence of headaches
- ✓ Lower stress levels

Whenever you think about it just be aware of where you are breathing from – abdomen or chest? Without being too concerned about it, if you are breathing more from your chest consciously try to



breathe from your abdomen. You might find it easier to put your hands on your tummy, fingertips just touching over the navel. As you inhale feel your tummy expand, so the hands lift and separate a little, as you exhale your tummy relaxes and the fingertips go back to touch. This may feel odd at first, but don't worry about it, just keep your awareness with the abdomen.

To find out more about breathing properly contact us, at isabel@yogainsideout.co.uk