

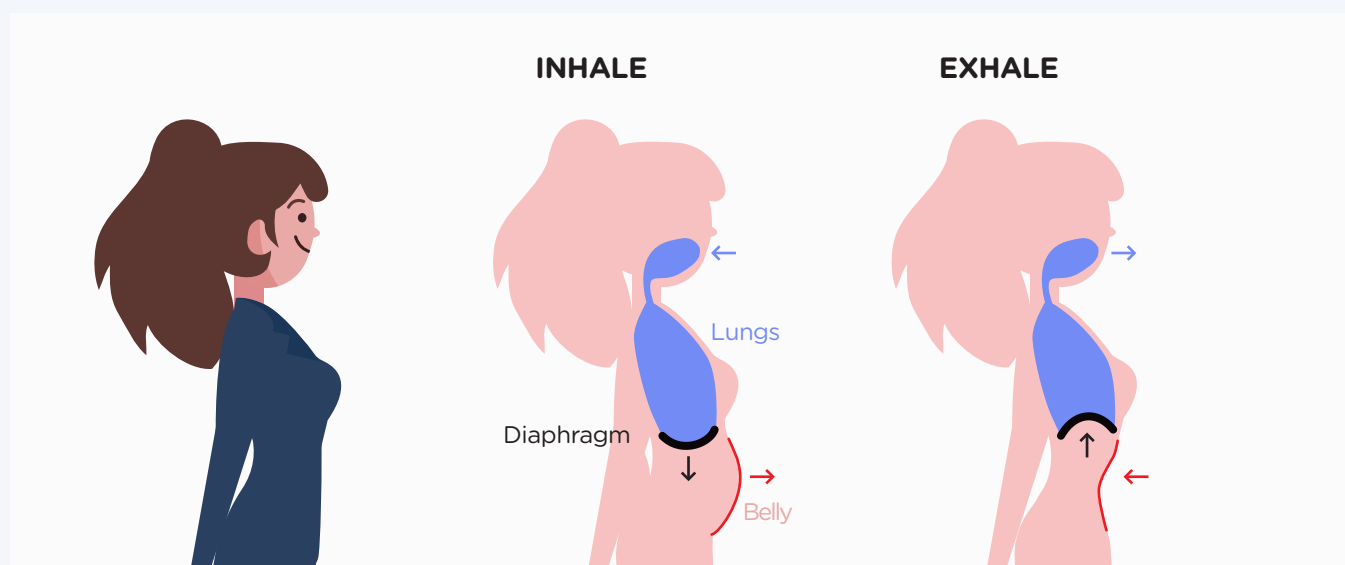
## Abdominal breathing

If I suspect I may have hypoglycemia and I feel symptoms of anxiety, the first thing to do is to **measure my blood sugar level**. If it's not hypoglycemia, this breathing technique can help me calm down and manage my anxiety.

Practising this technique on a regular basis for at least two weeks both in quiet times and in difficult times will help me benefit from it when my stress level is higher.

### DURING an anxiety attack

- 1 I settle into a seated, standing or lying position. I assess my anxiety level on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest level of anxiety I have ever experienced in my life).
- 2 I take a slow abdominal breath, by letting my belly inflate. To start, I can rest one hand on my chest and the other hand on my belly. When I inhale, the hand on my belly should be the only one to rise.
- 3 I exhale very slowly by imagining a line that moves down from my head to my feet. As it goes down, I feel every muscle group relax. I pull in my belly by contracting my abdominal muscles until the end of the exhalation.



- 4 I repeat the same steps several times.
- 5 I can then tell myself:  
"I know what it is. It's a panic attack. It's very unpleasant, but it's absolutely not dangerous. This does not last very long, so I just have to wait for it to be over. It's better to accept my anxiety and not run away from it."

## AFTER the anxiety attack

I reassess my anxiety level (1 to 10). I can then resume my activities, even if I still feel anxious. I preferably choose motor activities that do not require too much concentration or energy. If needed, I repeat the four steps as many times as I need to feel more comfortable.

## 4 VARIATIONS ON ABDOMINAL BREATHING

### The Waves

- 1 I visualize a wave that rises when I inhale through the nose while inflating my belly.
- 2 I imagine the sound of the wave falling while I exhale through the mouth and deflate my belly.

### The Flower and the Clouds

- 1 I imagine I'm smelling a lovely scented flower. I try to take in the subtle aromas by inhaling softly through the nose while inflating my lower belly.
- 2 I exhale softly while imagining that I'm blowing through a straw or a small tube while deflating my belly. I can imagine that I'm blowing my concerns into the clouds

### 3-6-5 Cardiac Coherence

This breathing exercise can be adjusted based on your needs. You can do it **3** times a day, repeating **6** times per minute for **5** minutes. There are other possible variations.

- 1 I inhale through the nose while inflating my belly, counting to 5.
- 2 I exhale through the mouth while very gently deflating my belly, counting to 5.
- 3 I pause the breath if needed to slow down my breathing for a maximum count of 3 after the inhale and a maximum count of 2 after the exhale.
- 4 I return to normal breathing, while observing my breath.
- 5 When I feel ready, I repeat the exercise from the beginning.

### Words of Calm

- 1 I say to myself "I breathe in calm" while I inhale through the nose and inflate my belly.
- 2 Then, I think "I become calm" while I exhale through the mouth and deflate my belly, feeling a sense of calm wash over me.

### For a more relaxing effect:

Inhale for a count of 4, and exhale for a count of 6.

A few smartphone applications to guide you:

- RespiRelax+
- My Cardiac Coherence
- Cardiac Coherence - Mindfulness