

IMG PHYSICAL THERAPY

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Breathing Strategies for Better Performance and Recovery

Breathing plays a critical role in performance, recovery, and even general health. Learning to breathe properly is something everyone can benefit from. When it comes to optimizing movement and recovery, the two most crucial pieces of the health and fitness performance “puzzle,” nothing is more important than proper breathing mechanics.

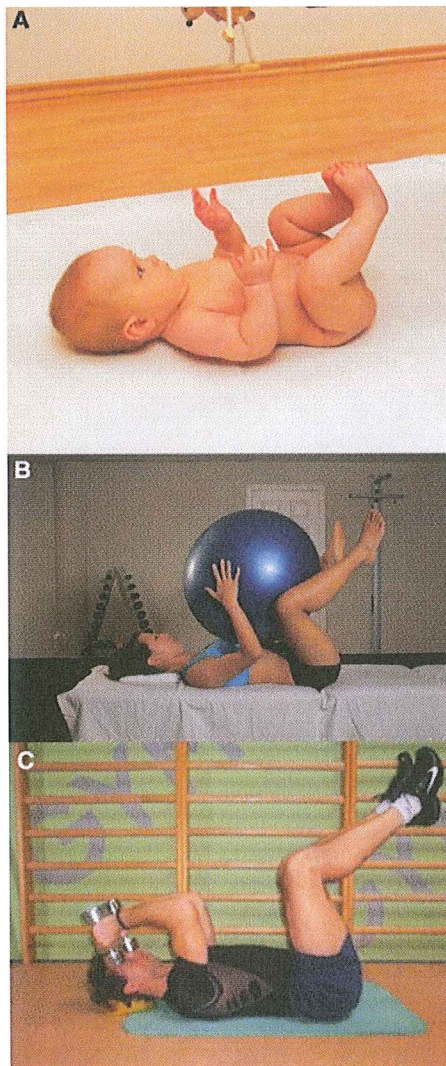
Breathing influences movement patterns, posture, pain, as well as performance by altering the position of the musculoskeletal system. Respiration can be trained just like any other component in your health, fitness, and performance programs.

In this packet are 5 simple breathing exercises to improve movement and recovery. These exercises are easy to incorporate into a dynamic warm-up or cool down and can even be done outside of therapy at home. After just a couple minutes of doing this type of breathing, you’ll feel noticeably looser and more relaxed.

Perform these exercises 1x per day before or after your therapy session.

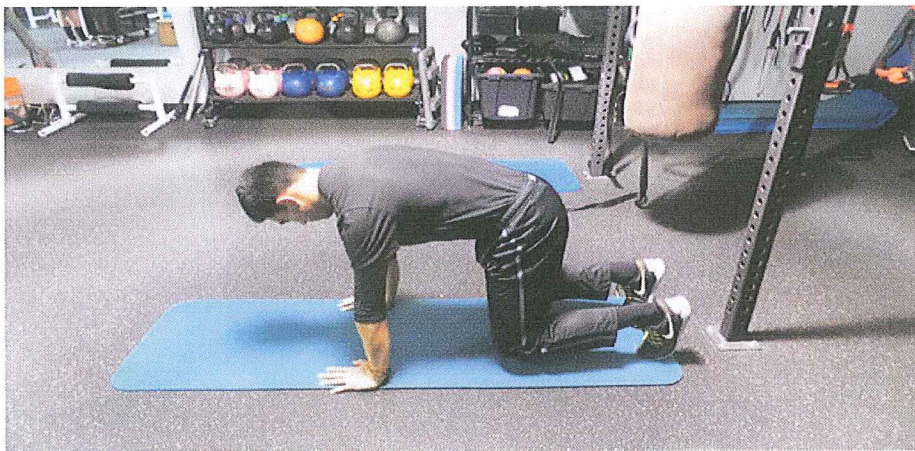
- Dynamic Neuromuscular Stabilization

- a. Supine with hips and knees flexed to 90 degrees
- b. Knees shoulder width apart
- c. Apply a downward pressure in the groin area with your fingers
- d. Feel the area of the abdominal wall and practice breathing without relaxation of the lower abdominals
- e. Goal of reflex stimulation is to set up an experience that transfers into exercise with volitional control
- f. Hold this position for 3-5 breaths and then relax
- g. Repeat and perform 3-5 repetitions



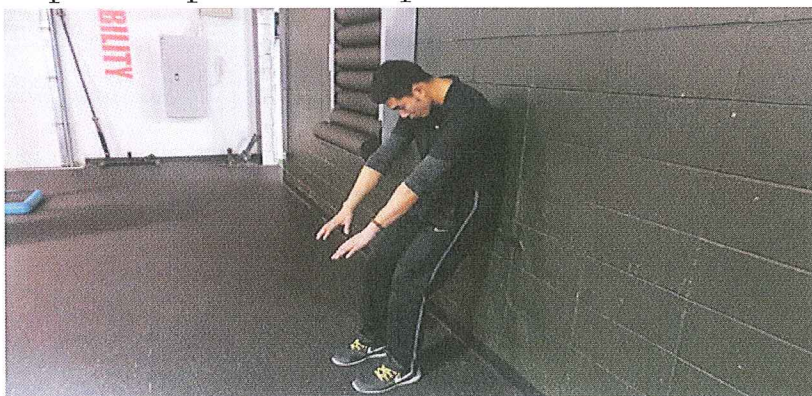
- Bear Breathing

- Position yourself on all fours
- Hands should be directly below the shoulders and knees directly below the hips
- Push long through the arms as if to push away from the floor until you feel a stretch between the shoulder blades
- Bring the knees off the floor until the shin is horizontal to the floor
- Hold this position as you take 3-5 full breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth
 - Relax and breathe normally for a few seconds
 - Repeat and perform 3-5 repetitions



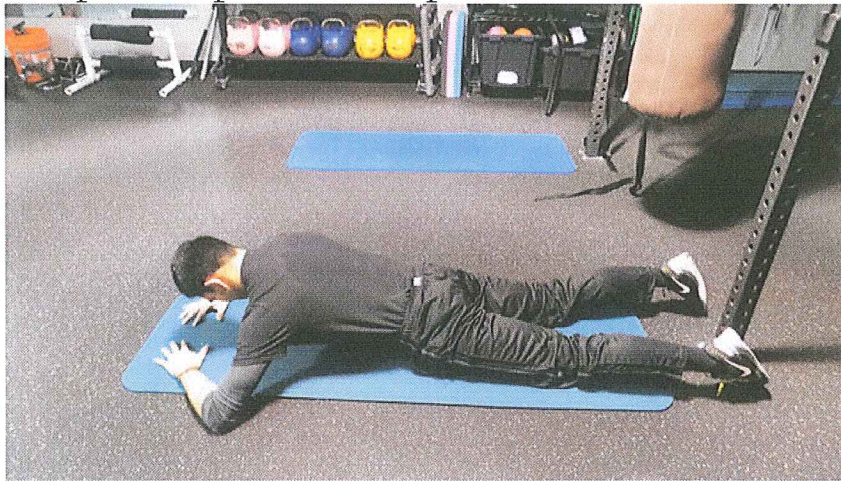
- Wall Breathing

- Stand with your back against a wall and feet hip width and 10-12 inches from the wall
- Posteriorly tilt the pelvis to flatten the lower back against the wall
- Reach forward maximally with both hands allowing the upper back to round forward
- Hold this position for 3-5 breaths and then relax
- Repeat and perform 3-5 repetitions



- Forearm Plank Breathing

- Lay face down on the floor
- Place the hands below face palm down on the floor such that they form a diamond shape with the index fingers and thumbs
- Push through the forearms and push the shoulders forward to lift the chest and abdomen upward off the floor until weight is only on the forearms and pubic bone
- Hold the upward position and perform 3-5 full breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth
- Return to the starting position
- Repeat and perform 3-5 repetitions



- Crocodile Breathing

- Retraining the body to breath diaphragmatically
- Lie prone
- Inhale through the nose and press the belly into the floor
- Sides of the bones of your hips and lower ribs starts to expand
- Exhale and sink into the floor

