

# Anxious Breathing.

Let's talk about it.



## What is anxious breathing?

When you're anxious, your breathing rate increases and it can feel like you just can't get enough air into your lungs. You might also feel lightheaded, clammy and sweaty, with tingling in your fingers and toes.

## Take a (deep) breath.

You probably don't think about your breathing all that often, and why would you? As long as you're breathing, that's all that matters, right?

**Wrong.** Think about this for a moment: actors, elite-level athletes and performance artists all incorporate breathing techniques into their training and work routines.

There's a good reason for this: focusing on your breathing can boost your physical and mental health – anxiety included.

When you're stressed, your breathing tends to be irregular and shallow, which can make it harder to get air into your lungs.

Deep breathing – also known as diaphragmatic breathing – is one of the ways to get more air into your body and, in turn, calm your nerves and reduce anxiety.

Think about performing artists before they hit the stage and athletes before they compete or race, you'll most likely see them using deep breathing techniques to get their nerves (and adrenaline) under control.

The great thing about deep breathing is that anyone can do it. In just a few easy steps, you can use deep breathing to get your anxiety under control.

## Steps to deep breathing.

1. Find a comfortable spot where you won't be disturbed. You can stand up, sit down or lie on your back – whatever you're comfortable with
2. Put one hand on your upper chest, and the other just below your rib cage. This will help you feel your diaphragm move as you breathe
3. Inhale slowly through your nose, drawing the breath down to the stomach. Feel your stomach push against your hand, with your chest remaining still
4. Exhale by tightening your abdominal muscles and let the stomach fall downward while exhaling through your mouth – your chest should remain still
5. Repeat for 5-10 minutes, until you feel relaxed

## Where to from here?

We all visit our dentist when we have a toothache. The same goes for our physical health and why we schedule appointments with our GP, gynaecologist, physio, chiro, dermatologist, naturopath... the list is endless.

So why treat our mental health and wellbeing any differently?

If you've been stressed or worried for a long time, or longer than normal, then let's talk about it.

**Access Psych is here to support you.**

Call us on **1800 644 327**

Email **info@accesspsych.com.au**

Website **accesspsych.com.au**

## Resources.



### Verywell Mind

Verywell Mind is an award-winning online resource that provides reliable and up-to-date information on a wide range of mental health topics. With an online library of over 5,500 articles, Verywell Mind offers comprehensive, evidence-based information to help support your mental health concerns. For more, visit: **verywellmind.com**



### Healthline

Healthline is an online source for health guidance. As well as being full of handy information on a range of mental health conditions, including anxiety, Healthline has an impressive number of articles outlining evidence-based techniques to deal with various mental health conditions. For more, visit: **healthline.com**

## For urgent support.

**If there's an immediate risk of harm to yourself or others, please call 000. If you need someone to talk with now, call:**

**Lifeline:** 13 11 14

**Beyond Blue:** 1300 22 4636 or chat online at **beyondblue.org.au**

**Suicide Call Back Service:**  
1300 659 467



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