

# HEALTH-WISE CONCEPTS

Facilitating Health and Wellness the Natural Way

## JUST B-R-E-A-T-H-E

The health benefits of breathing exercises are enormous and work as a natural tranquilizer for your nervous system. There are many different breathing practices that you can try but I'm going to share with you one that is easy to do and very effective. This particular exercise comes from Dr. Weil, a practitioner and teacher of integrative medicine. This breathing exercise called the **4-7-8, or Relaxing Breath Exercise**, is highly recommended by Dr. Weil for improving health. The key to this exercise is to remember the numbers 4, 7, and 8. It's not important to focus on how much time you spend in each phase of the breathing activity, but rather that you get the ratio correct. Here's how it's done: 1. Sit up straight 2. Place the tip of your tongue up against the back of your front teeth. Keep it there through the entire breathing process. 3. Breathe in silently through your nose to the count of four. 4. Hold your breath to the count of seven. 5. Exhale through your mouth to the count of eight, making an audible "woosh" sound. 6. That completes one full breath. Repeat the cycle another three times, for a total of four breaths. You can do this exercise as frequently as you want throughout the day, but it's recommended you don't do more than four full breaths during the first month or so of practice. Work your way up to eight full breath cycles at a time. Self-applied health enhancement methods like the 4-7-8 technique are particularly remarkable because of the broad array of real health benefits that are triggered. Learning to breathe mindfully can modify and accelerate your body's inherent self-regulating physiological and bioenergetic mechanisms. This is due to the fact that you're oxygenating your body properly as well as correcting your internal and energetic balance, and it has a direct impact on your nervous system. This in turn affects your entire body and its countless cellular functions, including all of your subtle energy systems. It's also important to realize that much of hypertension is controlled by the way you breathe, so breathing exercises are an excellent adjunct to your healthy lifestyle strategies to control high blood pressure. Breathing exercises have a positive impact on your: **Respiratory system**, which can reduce mental and physical fatigue, as well as relieve symptoms of asthma and bronchitis. **Circulatory system**, improving blood circulation and cell oxygenation throughout your body. **Nervous system and Digestive system**, by acting as a pump to massage internal organs. **Endocrine system**, as the action of your diaphragm helps push lymph throughout your body, which helps eliminate toxic waste and strengthen your immune system. **Urinary system**, by helping to eliminate fluids and massaging your kidneys. **Skin**, by eliminating CO2 waste more directly through your breath, and your skin can also be positively affected by improved blood flow and oxygenation. Another obvious benefit of this breathing technique is to use it whenever you feel stressed or anxious. It's a powerful way to help relax your system without drugs. Best of all, it doesn't cost you anything but a couple of minutes of your time! And, if you commit to it, I believe you'll be absolutely shocked, and pleasantly surprised, by how quickly and easily it can center and relax you and allow you to achieve high levels of health.

The web site [breathing.com](http://breathing.com) offers a list of clinical studies into the health benefits of optimal breathing.



### MEMBER MONTHLY SPECIAL

#### M'LIS SCRUB Facial Exfoliator

Scrub provides a deep cleansing action. It refines the skin by removing dead surface cells that contribute to clogged pores. It utilizes special rounded granules that are buffered and suspended in a rich, creamy lotion leaving the skin feeling fresh and alive. Helps reduce tiny wrinkles, uneven texture, and irregular pigmentation. Makes dull, lifeless skin look vibrant and healthy. Contains menthol which has a cooling and soothing effect to the face and irritated skin.

Members \$25.00 (savings of \$10)

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH ALMOND BUTTER COOKIES By CJ

### Ingredients

1 cup oat bran flour  
1 cup fresh almond butter  
1/4 cup Simply Sweet  
2 eggs

1 1/4 cup brown rice flour  
2/3 cup pure maple syrup  
1/2 cup softened butter  
1/2 tsp double acting baking powder

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In large bowl, measure all ingredients. With mixer at medium speed, beat until well mixed. With hands, shape dough into 1 inch balls, place on cookie sheet. Dip fork into flour and press into each cookie, repeating opposite direction. Bake 15 min. or just until lightly browned. Cool on wire rack.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**HAPPY  
ST. PATRICK'S  
DAY**

## SEVEN KEYS TO HEALTHY NECK POSTURE

Don't let your posture get you into trouble with your neck!! Whether at work or at home keeping good posture is critical in maintaining a healthy cervical spine. Following are seven of the most common postural problems along with self-care tips.

1. Flexed head/neck posture: Flexing the neck/head to look at a PDA or read a book in your lap requires isometric contraction of neck extensor muscles to hold the head in an imbalanced posture. Prevention: Bring the PDA or book up to eye level relieving stress on the neck. Note: It's important to keep the upper arm relaxed.
2. Forward carriage posture of head/neck: A forward (protracted) head posture also imbalances the head over thin air, placing a stress on neck extensor muscles. Prevention: Tuck in chin to flex the head, and extend lower neck back over trunk.
3. Holding arms in abduction to the side of body, in flexion in front of us, or anywhere in between: Holding our arms out in the air to work with a computer mouse/keyboard that is too far away, or trying to hold a book up to our eye level when reading requires scapular stabilization thus placing stress on our upper trapezius muscle. Prevention: Bring work closer to body so arm is relaxed and hanging vertically down by side.
4. Carrying a purse or bag on shoulder: To prevent the bag from sliding off means we have to elevate the shoulder thus contracting the upper trapezius and levator scapulae overusing these muscles of the neck. If the bag is heavy it can dig into the muscles causing direct physical irritation by cutting off local blood circulation. Prevention: Carry bag across the body.
5. Carrying heavy weight in our hand: Carrying a weight in the hand, such as a computer bag requires contraction of scapular elevation muscles to prevent the downward pull on the shoulder girdle by the weight. Prevention: Carry heavier weights in a bag with wheels or a backpack. Or, split the weight between the two hands to even the load.
6. "Crimping" a phone between the ear and shoulder: This requires isometric contraction of neck and shoulder girdle muscles. Prevention: Hold the phone with the opposite side hand allowing these muscles to relax.
7. Unhealthy sleep posture: Sleeping on the back or side with a pillow that is too thick places the neck in an unhealthy posture. Prevention: Use a thinner pillow to allow the neck and head to remain in a healthy neutral posture.

Follow these seven self-care tips and YOUR NECK WILL THANK YOU!