

Respiration Activities for Occupational Therapy

Why participate in occupational therapy for respiration?

Sometimes a child can demonstrate very shallow respiration, or breathing, which may make it difficult to get the right amount of oxygen. Teaching a child to breathe deeply can help them stay calm as well. There are many other wonderful benefits of blowing/respiration-based activities such as activating and strengthening cheeks, jaw, tongue, diaphragm, and other muscles associated with breathing.

Breathing Activities

Occupational therapy to practice breathing can be fun! Try the following breathing activities at home, or ask your occupational therapist for more tips:

- Practice deep, diaphragmatic breathing to calm one's self. Place hands on the belly to feel the rise and fall with every inhale and exhale.
- Use cues and practice breathing in through the nose (smell a flower, smell hot cocoa) and out through pursed lips (blow out a candle, cool the hot cocoa).
- Try different whistles.
- Practice prolonged respiration with cues. This could include humming, blowing bubbles, blowing a whistle for 5 seconds in a row, progressing to 10 seconds and so on.
- Bubbles: Find a container and fill 1/3 full of water. Add a little dish soap. Have your child blow through a straw into the bucket so that bubbles get larger. Try and keep your child engaged in this activity for 3 to 5 minutes.

□ If you are worried about your child drinking the soapy water, do not use soap. A variation to use would be filling a clear bucket or container with water and then adding big, cut up pieces of shiny tissue paper or glitter. When a child blows through the straw, the paper or glitter will swirl around in the container. Another option is using big items that can't be sucked up through the straw or place gauze/cheesecloth over the end of the straw.
- Take 5 deep breaths: count on hand with 1 breath for each finger.
- Do arts and crafts with blow markers.
- Use a straw to blow a cotton ball, small ball, plastic car or other lightweight items from one end of the room to the other or through a "maze" or "track" set up on the floor.
- Try blowing bubbles in thicker liquids or substances such as pudding to make "bubbles" or "explosions" in the pudding. Other options could include silly putty or slime.

[Make An Appointment](#) [651-290-8707](tel:651-290-8707)

This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care providers. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor or others on your health care team.

If you are a Gillette patient with urgent questions or concerns, please contact Telehealth Nursing at [651-229-3890](tel:651-229-3890).