Improve your Sleep
Relaxation Strategy

Deep breathing

Deep, consistent breathing signals to your body to be calm and relax.

Benefits

Regular practice can reduce stress and anxiety and improve sleep.

Key Points

- **Posture:** Lie down or sit comfortably. Have your eyes closed if possible.
- **Breathe into your belly:** You should feel your belly expand, not your chest.
- **Don't force it:** let your breath go in and out naturally. Your body already knows how to breathe.
- **Be consistent:** count in your head, or use a breathing app to keep time.
- **Practice:** deep breathing is a skill that benefits from regular practice

Suggested technique:

1. Sit up straight, rest comfortably on your back, or stand if you need to
2. Place one hand on your upper chest, and the other just above your belly button
3. Slowly inhale through your nose for about 4 seconds ensuring your belly gently rises
4. Slowly exhale through your mouth for about 4 seconds, relaxing your belly
5. Repeat for 5-10 minutes

Variations:

- Add a breath hold in between inhale and exhales ("box" breathing)
- Change the rate of breathing (more, or less time)
- Use a breathing app or timer to help you keep time
- Count the total number of breaths you take
- Practice the breathing technique when you're out and about