

Diaphragmatic Dysfunction

The following exercises will help to restore the normal function of the diaphragm and relieve the symptoms of diaphragmatic dysfunction. You may recognize some of these symptoms:

1. Indigestion – deep boring or burning pain in the upper abdomen especially after eating or lying down
2. Shortness of breath
3. Fatigue

*** The above symptoms may mimic angina, see your doctor if you are unsure about your condition. ***

4. Constipation
5. Congestion throughout the body (due to impaired circulation) such as in feet, hands, joints, abdomen, lungs and various other organs
6. Lowered immune system – frequent colds, chronic infection

Repeat the following exercises at least twice a day. An explanation will follow:

1. Drink a full glass of water. Then stand up on your toes and let yourself fall firmly onto your heels. Repeat this technique several times.
2. Place your fingertips as far up as you can under your breastbone to try to get on top of the stomach. Take a deep breath and as you breathe out pull downward on the stomach with your fingers.
3. With your fingertips, rub along the entire margin of the ribcage on the front of your diaphragm. Concentrate on tender areas.
4. Rub vigorously and firmly along the entire length of your breastbone.
5. Practice breathing deeply using your diaphragm and abdominal muscles.

Explanation:

The diaphragm forms a loop around the esophagus and the stomach and prevents the reflux of food into the esophagus once it has reached the stomach. If the diaphragm is not functioning (opening and closing) properly, it will allow the stomach content which is very acidic to reflux back into the esophagus or allow part of the stomach to slip through this loop. This causes a sharp burning or aching pain in the upper abdomen or chest and may mimic angina.

Drinking the glassful of water and then repeatedly coming down on the heels helps to pull the stomach back down with the help of gravity and the weight of the water. Similarly, pulling downwards on the stomach will help to pull it through the loop back into its normal position. Rubbing along the margin of the ribcage and along the breastbone will help to normalize the opening and closing of the diaphragmatic loop.

Some other important functions of the diaphragm are:

1. Aids in normal movement of the ribcage during respiration.
2. Acts as a secondary pump for blood and lymphatic circulation.
3. Acts as a pump for the circulation of energy through the meridians of the body.