



FAMILIES TACKLING TOUGH TIMES TOGETHER

Wellness Wednesday

Meditation can mean different things and look many different ways. At its heart, [meditation](#) is mind-body practice that involves bringing your attention and awareness under your control to foster well-being. Emerging science tells us that meditation may help [lower blood pressure, reduce anxiety and depression, and help people stop smoking](#). It can be a great tool for managing stress. Meditation may work by changing activity in parts of the [brain](#) related to controlling attention and emotions. It could even help protect our brains [as they age](#).

Breathing Exercises

Many people have heard about the benefits of meditation but aren't sure where to start. [Mindful breathing](#) exercises are easy and provide many of the [benefits](#) of other forms of meditation.

Mindful breathing can be done without any special equipment and only takes a few minutes at a time. It can provide benefits with only [15 minutes](#) of daily practice. Give it a try:

- Start by finding some place with as few distractions as possible (but don't worry if you are interrupted— you can always pause then come back to the activity).
- Pay attention to your breath. Breath in and out at a normal pace.
- Focus on the sensation of your breath. If your mind starts to wander, that's ok. Just notice that it's happened and gently bring your focus back to your breath.
- Try [counting as you breathe](#). Count silently "1" on inhalation and "2" on exhalation, etc. When you reach number "10", return to number "1." If you go past 10, your mind has wandered.
- Continue for 5-7 minutes or as long as you like. When you're done, take a moment to notice how your body and mind feel.

There are lots of activities with audio and video clips to help teach [adults and kids](#) about mindful breathing. And remember, there are lots of [other ways to meditate](#) too. You might even try an [app](#) that can help you make mindful breathing and other types of meditation part of your routine.

[Dimensions of Wellness](#) Related to Meditation & Mindful Breathing

- Physical
- Emotional
- Spiritual
- Intellectual
- Vocational

