

4-7-8 Breathing Exercise

This handout offers information on how to do the 4-7-8 Breathing Exercise. This breathing exercise can have a relaxing or calming effect on your mind and body. It slows down the part of your nervous system that controls your heart.

For this exercise, it is important for you to breathe out twice as long as you breathe in. Following the counting of 4-7-8 will help you do this.

How to do the 4-7-8 breathing exercise

1. You can sit or lie down. You should be comfortable. Your back should be straight.
2. Place the tip of your tongue against the ridge of tissue just behind your upper front teeth. Keep it there for the entire exercise.
3. Breathe out through your mouth completely.
4. Close your mouth and breathe in through your nose quietly and count to 4.
5. Hold your breath and count to 7.
6. Breathe out through your mouth and count to 8.
7. Repeat steps 4-6. Do this 3 more times.
8. Breathe normally. Pay attention to how your body feels.

It may be helpful for you to do this exercise at least 2 times a day. You can also do it any time you want to relax your body and mind.

(Adapted From the CD: Breathing: The Master Key to Self-Healing by Andrew Weil)