



**Consider these six breathing techniques to enhance your halotherapy session and to keep calm and carry on for the rest of the day.**

### **1. Sama Vritti or “Equal Breathing”**

**How it’s done:** Balance can do a body good, beginning with the breath. To start, inhale for a count of four, then exhale for a count of four — all through the nose, which adds a natural resistance to the breath. Want to take it up a notch? For a more advanced breathing technique you can aim for six to eight counts per breath with the same goal in mind: calm the nervous system, increase focus and reduce stress.

**When it works best:** Anytime, anyplace — this breath can help take your mind off the racing thoughts, or whatever might be distracting you from relaxing.

**Level of difficulty:** Beginner

### **2. Abdominal Breathing Technique**

**How it’s done:** With one hand on the chest and the other on the belly, take a deep breath in through the nose, ensuring the diaphragm (not the chest) inflates with enough air to create a stretch in the lungs. The goal: Six to 10 deep, slow breaths per minute for 10 minutes to experience immediate reductions in heart rate and blood pressure.

**When it works best:** Before an exam, or any stressful event. Controlling the breath might be a little hard for some to master so to help train the breath, consider using biofeedback tools such as a breathing app. Some are listed at the end.

**Level of difficulty:** Beginner

### **3. Nadi Shodhana or “Alternate Nostril Breathing”**

**How it’s done:** A yogi’s best friend, this breath is said to bring calm and balance, and unite the right and left sides of the brain. Starting in a comfortable meditative pose, hold the right thumb over the right nostril and

inhale deeply through the left nostril. At the peak of inhalation, close off the left nostril with the ring finger, so both nostrils are closed; retain your breath at the top of the inhale for a brief pause. Now open your right nostril and exhale; pause briefly at the bottom of the exhale. Inhale through the right side. Hold both nostrils closed, briefly, then open your left nostril and exhale; pause briefly at the bottom. Repeat through 5-10 cycles, allowing your mind to follow the inhales and exhales.

**When it works best:** Whenever you want to focus or have a more energizing experience. Nadi shodhana is said to “clear the channels” and make people feel more awake. It’s almost like a cup of coffee!

**Level of difficulty:** Intermediate

#### **4. Kapalabhati or “Skull Shining Breath”**

**How it’s done:** Ready to brighten up your day from the inside out? This one begins with a long, slow inhale, followed by a quick, powerful exhale generated from the lower belly. Once comfortable with the contraction, up the pace to one inhale-exhale (all through the nose) every one to two seconds, for a total of 10 breaths.

**When it works best:** When it’s time to wake up, warm up or start looking on the brighter side of things. This is a more abdominal-intensive technique, but it will warm up the body, shake off stale energy and wake up the brain. If alternate nostril breathing is like coffee, consider this a shot of espresso.

**Level of difficulty:** Advanced

#### **5. Progressive Relaxation**

**How it’s done:** To nix tension from head to toe, close the eyes and focus on tensing and relaxing each muscle group for two to three seconds each. Start with the feet and toes, then move up to the knees, thighs, rear, chest, arms, hands, neck, jaw and eyes — all while maintaining deep, slow breaths. Having trouble staying on track? Try breathing in through the nose, hold for a count of five while the muscles tense, then breathe out through the mouth on release.

**When it works best:** One word of caution: Dizziness is never the goal. If holding the breath ever feels uncomfortable, tone it down to just a few seconds at most.

**Level of difficulty:** Beginner

## **6. Guided Visualization**

**How it's done:** Head straight for your “happy place,” no questions asked. Breathe deeply while focusing on pleasant, positive images to replace any negative thoughts. Guided visualization helps puts you in the place you want to be, rather than letting your mind go to the internal dialogue that is stressful.

**When it works best:** Pretty much any time and place you can safely close your eyes and let go!

**Level of difficulty:** Intermediate

**Also consider trying to meditate during Halotherapy with a focus on breathing. If you do not meditate yet, consider using a guided meditation program such as Global Halotherapy's KSara Guided Meditation for Halotherapy.**