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BIRTH & BODYWORK

Release Your Own Respiratory Diaphragm

A tight respiratory diaphragm can lead to many symptoms of discomfort, including

- Shortness of breath
- Feeling unable to take a full or deep breath
- Constant kicking in the ribs (baby may be asking for more room)
- Nausea
- Heartburn
- Difficulty Sleeping
- Upper/middle back pain or discomfort
- Abdominal/uterine discomfort
- Alternative baby position (ie breech presentation)



From pre-pregnancy, to early and late pregnancy, through birth and postpartum, you can add balance to your own respiratory diaphragm in the comfort of your home. Follow this instructional video to see someone adding balance to their own respiratory diaphragm during pregnancy with Rachel's verbal instructions, to help you at home. Only do this technique if it feels right to your body.



IMPORTANT: IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS TECHNIQUE, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER BEFORE YOU PERFORM IT. (FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU WERE PRESCRIBED BED REST DUE TO PRETERM CONTRACTIONS, PLEASE ASK YOUR MIDWIFE OR PHYSICIAN BEFORE PERFORMING BALANCE TECHNIQUES.)

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How to Restore Balance to your Respiratory Diaphragm

BY RACHEL SHAPIRO

1. Prepare a bottle of oil (I use almond oil) next to your bed.
2. Go to the bathroom.
3. Lie comfortably on your back. Arrange pillows as needed, under your head and knees and anywhere else that is nice for you. (Note: if you are uncomfortable on your back, consider several pillows or a “wedge pillow” to help you find a comfortable position.)
4. Place some oil on your hands, and lift your shirt so that your belly is exposed beyond your ribs.
5. Place your fingers in the middle of your upper belly, under the ribs, slightly to one side.
6. Trace your fingers slowly and gently under the ribs, so the fingers are not touching bone, but only soft tissue
7. Repeat this action, this time taking a deep breath in. If you feel tension, pause there and wait for this to melt away or become less tender. Do NOT increase pressure into tenderness. Less is more.
8. Continue this for 2-5 minutes, then switch sides and repeat on the other side, being careful to touch only under the ribs, and not the bone itself.
9. *Note: it is common to feel one side being tighter or more tender than the other. Allow for this variation, and nevertheless, always do this exercise on both sides for improved balance.

