

# Asthmatic Attack Relieved by Exhalation Breathing Exercise

**QUESTION** — Will breathing exercises help cure my asthma? — Mrs. D. L. H.

**ANSWER** — Mrs. D. L. H., it is overoptimistic to expect breathing exercises to have a curative effect, but many asthmatics can be helped con-

siderably by changing the way they breathe. In essence, ordinary deep breathing in which the upper part of the chest is lifted (as when chest expansion is being measured) is forbidden. Instead, breathing is placed un-

der diaphragmatic control. This means that the abdominal muscles are employed principally, and emphasis is on exhalation rather than on inhalation. All the details cannot be given here, but your physician can provide the

necessary guidance. **THERE IS** nothing complicated about the exercises, which are carried out either in a sitting position or lying down with the knees bent. Modifications include applica-

tion of pressure to the sides of the lower chest with the flat of the hands, as well as forward and side bending in the standing position. Often an asthmatic attack can be prevented if the exercises are started at the first sign of distress. The exercises have been found to reassure patients, as well as reduce the

amount of special medicines that may otherwise be needed. **QUESTION** — I have arthritis of the neck bones, and lately have noticed I tend to walk unsteadily. Do you think there is any connection? J. O.

**ANSWER** — Well, J. O., depending on the severity of your arthritis, you may be

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holding your head tilted slightly to one side. This could affect the organs of equilibrium and could result in uncertainty in your gait. But there are many causes of unsteady gait and any of these might be presented without direct relationship to your

arthritis. It would be best to see your doctor. (Presented as a Public Service by the South County District of the Los Angeles County Medical Association.)

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