

Health hints: how to best breath!

Abstract

People can choke on food anywhere, even in ballparks while munching on food at an exciting game (A young woman died choking at Wrigley Field several years ago). The following is offered as a STAY HEALTHY hint for everyone. If you do not know this, you will likely make choking worse! If you breathe this way, you will have more oxygen for whenever you may need it. And it prevents psychological “choking” by detachment from the source of emotionality.

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To breathe safely, you have to know and have practiced the SAM: Shut mouth; Air in nose; then Mouth cough loudly (or exhale).

Shutting the mouth prevents food or anything in the mouth from going into the airway. Regularly overlooked, a shut mouth facilitates nose breathing! Air gets into the lungs easier through the nose than through the mouth, and fewer muscles are used with nasal breathing. After inhaling through the nose with a shut mouth, the mouth cough can usually clear what is causing the choking. Also, if not choking, this method facilitates normal and sport breathing, i.e., Instead of the cough step, exhaling by mouth should improve respiratory rate and oxygenation (Of course, one can also exhale, and probably should, through the nose).

If someone is choking, tell them firmly: Shut your mouth! Air in thru your nose! Mouth cough loudly! Repeat it again for them... until airway is open. Then tell them to do that always to open their clogged throat. If they cannot do it because the obstruction is too complete, then proceed with the Heimlich Maneuver: Go behind and wrap arms about the chest grabbing with one hand the closed fist of the other hand. Place the grabbed fist just below the sternum and jerk in firmly and quickly a couple of inches. Do this several times to dislodge the object in the throat. Then have them do the SAM until clearly breathing easily again.

All this is strange to do and almost impossibly lucky if you do it spontaneously when choking or having a clogged throat. It is a genuine maneuver one must know and practice, as when eating, coughing, clearing one's throat and even when just breathing. If not taught and practiced, it will not be remembered when needed.

The SAM method should be on the inside front cover of every pamphlet for public events. It is pure safety for everyone and good public relations helping all. Three steps:

- i. Purely clinical.
- ii. Non-technical.
- iii. Universally beneficial.

No negative side effects. Discoverable only by someone repeatedly going through choking (as has been the case many times in medical history). Can be life-saving and definitely anxiety reducing. Should be part of all first aid courses, used after all Heimlich Maneuvers, and taught in intensive care, respiratory and medical facilities. Should be a routine exercise as common as brushing one's teeth. Physiologically

confirmable, performable even by children. A safe and effective way to cough and/or to clear one's throat and Choke preventing. Probably oxygen enhancing for athletes and helping them stay focused. No doubt nasal breathing typically occurs naturally but it definitely is the best way to breathe when consciously aware of breathing or with breathing difficulty. The SAM does not come naturally with breathing difficulty and needs to be taught, learned and practiced. The SAM enables the larynx to function more effectively for respiration improving oxygenation.

Another fact is that NASAL BREATHING is the most natural and healthy way to breath:

- i. “Closing one's mouth first” is the discovery necessary for efficient and effective nasal breathing. Teach and say “SAM” to those in need.
- ii. Laryngeal physiology moves air in and out by the nose more efficiently than by the mouth. (Nasal breathing is spontaneously routine, and watches good athletes breath--most keep their mouths closed most of the time.)
- iii. Nasal breathing is mainly diaphragmatic while mouth breathing uses chest muscles which consume more oxygen.
- iv. The mucous membranes of the mouth work best when moist and more efficiently prevent diseases thereby (Most infections and contagious diseases enter the body through the mouth). A dry mouth because of mouth breathing does not protect well. Nasal breathing gives a more healthy mouth.
- v. Snoring dries the mouth, so try to sleep as you breathe by the nose WITH YOUR MOUTH SHUT... it has to be practiced. It may stop the snoring also which is all through the mouth breathing (The gadgets sold to stop snoring all reduce mouth inhaling).
- vi. Another related recommendation is to brush your mouth and not only your teeth twice daily. Vigorous massage of gums and mouth membranes strengthens them. Strong gums prevent disease especially with your mouth shut.

Routine over-the-counter mouth rinses and/or salt water mouth rinse/gargles should kill germs too.

All proceeding should help you remain healthier but you have to practice doing it. Breathing is so automatic and natural, we do not realize that there is a “best” way to do it, and knowing and practicing the SAM promotes healthy nasal breathing. (And, by the

way, it works as a panic/temper/rage/confusion stopping technique by DETACHMENT from the source of emotionality to calmer self-awareness with improved oxygenation--"Just do the SAM and think it through!".)

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Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.