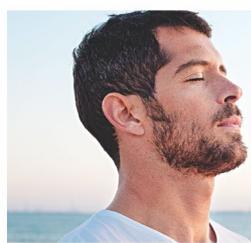


SELF-TAUGHT BREATHING RETRAINING

Improving quality of life for people with asthma

STAR HEALTH DESK

Self-taught breathing retraining improves quality of life just as much as training by a physiotherapist, according to the largest randomised controlled trial to test such training published in The Lancet Respiratory Medicine journal.



The self-taught training includes a video and booklet, and shows similar results to face-to-face training with a physiotherapist in helping improve people's quality of life by improving symptoms, mood, and ability to conduct day-to-day activities.

improve lung function. As a result, it is not a replacement for medication and people would need to continue their usual treatment alongside the breathing exercises.

Our findings suggest that a self-help breathing intervention can be offered conveniently and cost-effectively alongside usual drug treatments to people with asthma whose quality of life is impaired by their disease, despite treatment," says lead author Professor Mike Thomas, University of Southampton, United Kingdom.

The self-taught training involved breathing exercises (diaphragmatic breathing, nasal breathing, slow breathing) and relaxation techniques, and information on how the techniques worked to improve symptoms and a daily planner and progress chart.

taught and physiotherapist training groups showed improved quality of life. Compared to those given usual care, quality of life was similar in both training groups.

These groups also showed slightly reduced levels of depression compared to the usual care group, but the breathing retraining had no effect on anxiety. In addition, none of the participants in any groups showed improvements in their lung function, or reduced inflammation of their airways.

Participants rated the self-taught and physiotherapist training positively, and felt that they had better control over their breathing, less need for rescue medication during breathing difficulties, felt more relaxed and had a better quality of life.

There were similar rates of adverse events in the three groups (39% in self-taught group, 42% in physiotherapist group, 50% in usual care), suggesting that the breathing retraining caused no additional adverse events or side effects.

NEW ANALYSIS



Coffee consumption — in particular, several cups daily — is associated with a wide range of health benefits, according to an umbrella review of meta-analyses in The BMJ.

The review included over 200 meta-analyses of observational or interventional research into coffee consumption and health outcomes in adults.

Among the benefits:
• Daily consumption of 3 cups of coffee — regular or decaffeinated — was associated with a 17% lower risk for all-cause mortality, relative to no coffee consumption.

• Caffeinated coffee was associated with lower risks for cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease, and stroke, with benefits highest at 3-5 cups daily.

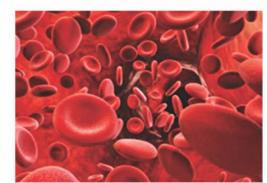
• Caffeinated coffee was associated with lower risks for cancer and liver conditions.

• Both regular and decaf coffee appeared to lower risk for type 2 diabetes.

In terms of harms, high coffee consumption in pregnancy was tied to pregnancy loss, low birth weight, and preterm birth. High consumption was also associated with higher fracture risk in women, but not men.

An editorialist writes: "The evidence is so robust and consistent that we can be reassured that drinking coffee is generally safe." He adds, however, that pregnant women and those at high fracture risk should be educated about possible adverse effects.

HEALTH bulletin



Promising cure for Haemophilia

A gene therapy trial by London researchers has seen remarkable success in finding a long-term cure for Haemophilia A. The trial, by researchers at Barts Health NHS (National Health Service) Trust and Queen Mary University of London, used gene therapy to inject one dose of a missing gene in patients with the condition, and the gene continued functioning in the body for more than a year.

This is the first successful gene therapy to treat the condition. Haemophilia A is a hereditary genetic disorder, mostly affecting men, causing people to have low levels of clotting factor VIII, needed for their blood to clot. Lack of the protein factor results in excessive bleeding from even minor injuries and can cause internal bleeding, which is life-threatening.

To date, there is no permanent cure for haemophilia, and patients have to take multiple weekly injections of clotting factor VIII to prevent and control bleeding. "I'm very optimistic that we can deliver long-term treatment benefits," said John Paine, Haemophilia Centre director at Barts Health NHS Trust and lead author of the study published in The New England Journal of Medicine.

Apollo Hospitals Dhaka successfully operated a case of haemangioblastoma

A 33 year old Bangladeshi man was working abroad. He had a happy life. However, two months ago he started to have some problems. He was having numbness on the left side of his face, neck and upper limbs. The numbness progressed to the left side of the entire body. A month later he noticed some weakness on the left side of the body, which rapidly progressed to the right side.



A Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan of brain, of a patient with haemangioblastoma, a tumour of the central nervous system that originates from the vascular system.

The tumours are extremely vascular, that means they bleed a lot during operation.

The operation was particularly risky and difficult as the tumour was inside the brainstem. The tumours touching or compressing the brainstem can be devastating. However, in this case you need to take the tumour out. A little bit of unsteady movement can put the patient in permanent coma or paralysis of all limbs, inability to swallow or even death.

The patient and his family were counselled about the operation and they were explained that there is no treatment other than operation, although the operation was extremely risky. They agreed and went for the operation.

The patient recovered well from anaesthesia. He was kept in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The limb power started improving from the first post-operative day. After a few days, his swallowing reflex came back and he started taking food orally. After about 12 days he started walking with support. Post-operatively a CT scan showed complete resection of the tumour. When he came to for follow up, he was ambulatory without any kind of help.

A Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan of brain was done. It showed a tumour in the medulla, which is a part of brainstem. He started preparing for a medical consultation and was admitted in a nursing home. Very soon he became bedridden and he lost the ability to swallow food and even his saliva. A nasogastric tube was inserted to feed him. In just a matter of two months, he became completely bedridden from a fully active young man. The future was dark for the family.

They were in search of a neurosurgeon who could operate the tumour in the brainstem. Brainstem is the most vital part of the brain to operate upon. This is the point of all difficult centres of the brain. This area controls movement of the limbs and face, sensation of the body and face, consciousness, balance of the body, swallowing, heartbeat,

respiration and blood pressure etc. The family was at a fix where they should go. They got reference of Dr Amitabha Chanda, who is among the few surgeons with an experience of operating on brainstem.

The tumour was suspected to be a haemangioblastoma. Haemangioblastomas are tumours of the central nervous system that originate from the vascular system usually during the middle age. Sometimes these tumours occur in other sites such as the spinal cord and retina.



Stand the clock campaign for UHC Day 2017

STAR HEALTH REPORT

The Stand the Clock for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) campaign took place in Dhaka and at all the other divisional cities of Bangladesh as a joint initiative of SERAC-Bangladesh, Universal Health Coverage Coalition, Bangladesh Youth Health Action Network, Right Here Right Now Bangladesh, and many other local NGOs, universities and medical colleges on December 12, 2017.

The campaign was intended to raise voices and demands for access to affordable and quality healthcare for everyone and to recognise health as fundamental human rights in the constitution of Bangladesh.

This campaign was initiated to focus on the meaningful participation of young people, ensuring health and well-being of young people in the country. This march brought together 600 young leaders from the 8 divisions, alongside health professionals and advocates, and experts on health rights, sexual and reproductive health of youth and adolescents government, policy and decision makers.

The campaign provided a platform for youth delegates where they decided to form a "National Youth Network on UHC to ensure access to healthcare, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), and quality medicine issues" to follow up commitments and actions of stakeholders. SERAC-Bangladesh will facilitate the process as a follow up of the decision.



Best Foods for Your Anti-Aging Diet

Water: Not a food, you say? Think of it as one. Many older people simply don't drink enough water because they don't feel as thirsty as they used to. Water is so underappreciated. Our bodies are mostly water. If you're chronically dehydrated, just think of what your cells look like," says Robin Foroutan, a New York nutritionist. "You can't think as clearly, you get fatigued more easily, you don't tolerate heat as well."

Fiber: Dietary fiber -- from things like vegetables, whole grains, fruits, and legumes -- helps regulate your digestive system. That can help ease constipation, which is an issue for many older people. It can lower your cholesterol, blood pressure, and inflammation. That can lead to a healthier heart.

Salmon: A heart-healthy all-star, salmon (and other fatty fish like mackerel and sardines) are high in omega-3 fatty acids. They help prevent heart disease and stroke. Try to get at least two servings a week.

Olive oil: A 2015 study showed a "significant" drop in "bad" cholesterol (LDL) and an increase in "good" cholesterol (HDL) among those given extra virgin olive oil. The experiment concluded that it helps increase your amount of the antioxidants we mentioned earlier



Blueberries: "Always delicious," says Angel Pannels, a nutritionist in Seattle, "and packed with various antioxidants." Antioxidants are things, like vitamin C or vitamin E, that can prevent or minimize damage to your cells.

Yogurt: Bone loss gets worse as you get older. Calcium helps keep it to a minimum, and yogurt is a good source of it. Get yogurt fortified with vitamin D, which aids in the absorption of that key mineral. Yogurt also helps you digest your food, and it has protein, too. And add some fruit, Pannels says.

Tomatoes: Foods high in lycopene, like tomatoes, can help protect you against prostate cancer and may help prevent lung cancer, too. Cooked or processed tomatoes (like in juice, paste, and sauce) may be more effective than raw ones. Researchers believe that heating or mashing tomatoes releases more of the fruit's lycopene.

Broccoli: Filled with all sorts of vitamins and antioxidants, broccoli is high in fiber, too. It should be in everyone's kitchen, Pannels says.

Nuts: Omega-3s, unsaturated fats (that's the good kind), fiber, protein... nuts are heart-healthy nutrition in the palm of your hand. Shoot for five, 1-ounce servings per week.

