

Chest Breathing 2

Engaging the Breathing Muscles at the Sides of your Chest

- Take a big breath.
 - All the way in.
- Breathe in even more.
- Notice where your rib cage is stretching.
- Notice what parts of your body are working to give you a breath this full.

Chances are you felt that in front of your chest, *and* in the sides of your chest.

The sides of your rib cage are important in getting full, deep breaths. This area is under your arm pits and runs down to the outside of your hip bones. Most of us have forgotten there are muscles there. They don't complain much and we don't spend much time looking at them. Out of site, out of mind.



If you want your breath to be full and rich and energizing, you need to convince these muscles to work for you, even when you're not thinking about them.

How do you do that? Ha ha. I thought you'd never ask! With good stretches and chest breathing practice.

Basic Practice in Chest Breathing 2

Any time it occurs to you, place your hands on the sides of your rib cage, as shown in the picture above.

- Breathing in, breathe toward your hands.
- Feel your rib cage opening wide, filling up your palms.
- Pause your breathing and your movement, holding your breath.
- Breathing out, just let your chest drop.
- Feel the air dropping away.

Do this several times.

Wrap up with extreme breathing. For two or three more breaths

- Breathe in as much as you possibly can.
- Notice how this stretches out the sides of your rib cage to their limit.
- Pause, holding your breath.
- Breathing out, just let your chest drop.
- Feel the air dropping away.

Good Stretches for the Sides of Your Chest

Any stretch that lifts your arms high toward the ceiling or across and lifts your arms over your head is going to develop the muscles at the sides of your chest. Be sure to include at least one of these during the Warm Up part of your yoga routine.



Complete Breath, Simple Side Bend and **Sitting Side Stretch** are my favourites. They're simple and just about anyone can do them.



- If you can't lift your arms over your head, try
- Elbow to Knee 1
- Elbow to Knee 2
- Triangle Discovery



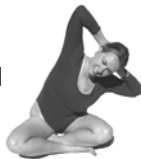
Other good ones include

Wood Chopper



Half Moon

Elbow to Knee 1 or 2



Side Bend



Triangle Poses