

# THE BREATHER™

ONE DEVICE - MANY THERAPIES

---

## TRANSCRIPT

### LESSON 01: WHO TAKES THIS COURSE & WHY

---

#### Carrie:

Hi everyone. My name is Carrie. I'll be your guide through this three lesson training course for **The Breather**, a respiratory muscle training device that trains both inspiratory and expiratory muscles.

This course is for respiratory, speech, occupational, and physical therapists, as well as patients who are diagnosed with the conditions including COPD, asthma, vent weaning, dysphagia, stroke, hypertension, Parkinson's, chronic heart failure, and ICU acquired weakness.

**The Breather** is the first drug free evidence-based respiratory muscle training device of its kind used by patients to improve dyspnea, quality of life, and speech and swallow performance.

The clinical benefits include increased PI-max and PE-max, higher exercise tolerance, reduced hyperinflation, reduced systolic and diastolic blood pressure, improved oxygen saturation, increased PIF and PEF, stronger peak cough flow, improved laryngeal function for speech and swallow, and improved cardiac autonomy. We'll be learning more about **The Breather** throughout the next two lessons.

But first, I want to introduce you to Peggy Nicholson, the person behind what we'll be learning today. She's the inventor of **The Breather** and has dedicated the majority of her life to pulmonary and speech rehabilitation. It's an honor to introduce her.

#### Peggy:

40 years ago, I started my career in cardiopulmonary rehab, never quite realizing then that I had found my passion, to help people who suffer from chronic pulmonary diseases. Back in the '70s as a new therapist, I wanted to give my patients more than basic exercise routines. So in 1979, I started researching for a better solution.

**Peggy:**

After a few years of prototypes and patient feedback, I invented **The Breather**. It's an inspiratory, expiratory resistive respiratory muscle training device. To date, **The Breather** has helped a million people who suffer from chronic pulmonary diseases and speech disorders.

And now Carrie is here to get you started in respiratory muscle training.

**Carrie:**

And now, let's go to [Lesson 02](#), where we'll learn how to use and clean **The Breather**.

---

# TRANSCRIPT

## LESSON 02: USING & CLEANING THE BREATHER

---

OK, it's time to get familiar with how your **Breather** functions.

In his lesson, I will demonstrate how to use **The Breather** and how to properly clean it after use. First, let's go over **The Breather**.

**The Breather** is a respiratory muscle training device that trains both inspiratory and expiratory muscles. Breathing against resistance during respiratory muscle training activates and strengthens respiratory muscles, as well as improves health and quality of life.

The primary mouthpiece was scientifically designed to help patients with poor mouth grip. You will use this mouthpiece to perform your daily training regimen.

The secondary mouthpiece can be used for connecting your **Breather** to other tubes or devices if required by your clinician.

Now, look at **The Breather** and notice one side numbered one through six labeled inhale. These are your inhalation resistance settings, one being the easiest and six being the hardest.

The other side is numbered one through five, labeled exhale. This is for exhalation resistance, one being the easiest, five being the hardest.

The dials adjust independently of each other. As you progress through training, your inhalation settings can be different from your exhalation settings. This allows you to create highly targeted treatment protocols, which are unique to each patient.

Now that you're more familiar with your **Breather**, let's get ready to use it for the first time.

Over the years we've found that going through a pre-session checklist is an optimal way to improve your success rate. After a few days, this will become second nature to you.

First, be mindful of how you're feeling right before you start a session. Do I have shallow breath? Am I calm? Am I fatigued?

Why do this? It's good to take note of how you felt just before a session to how you felt right after so you can have instant feedback.

Second, check your posture.

To begin, sit up straight in a comfortable, straight-backed chair with relaxed shoulders and your back against the chair. Slouched posture impairs respiratory muscle function. If you can't sit up due to your physical condition, try to semi-recline or lie down on your bed.

Third, we'll begin with the easiest inhalation and exhalation resistances by rotating both dials to number one.

Fourth, it is very important that you use the diaphragmatic breathing technique.

Feel your stomach expand as you inhale and return as you exhale. Keep in mind that your upper chest should barely expand while inhaling and your shoulders are relaxed.

If you need more training on this breathing exercise, we've created a bonus lesson for you just on diaphragmatic breathing. You can watch this free bonus lesson and more by becoming a member of **The Breather Club** at any time during or after this course. If you're on [our web-site](#), you'll see the [link](#) to join on your right.

Fifth, secure the mouthpiece with your lips making sure not to bite down on the mouth piece, as it may cause undue jaw pressure or inadequate seal with your lips.

Sixth, if you can't complete the prescribed number of reps and sets in a session, pace yourself.

You're strengthening your speech and respiratory muscles in a new way. They need time to adjust. Try to give us 60 to 70% effort of breathing force. You'll burn out before your third breath if you go at 100% on each rep.

Think about lifting weights. You want to make it to the final rep before exhaustion.

OK, we finished our pre-session checklist. Now we're ready to begin a training session. You don't have to start using **The Breather** yet though.

For the rest of this lesson, just watch me as I demonstrate.

After exhaling slowly through pursed lips, secure **The Breather** in your hand and inhale deeply and forcefully for approximately two to three seconds. Inhaling longer than two to three seconds does not yield better results.

Notice your stomach and rib cage expanding. You can actually feel the muscles in these areas.

Also, notice the muscles in your neck as you breathe in against resistance. Be sure to relax your upper chest and shoulders, doing your best to keep your shoulders from rising toward your ears.

Pause slightly under a second.

Now, exhale forcefully for two to three seconds.

Do not puff your cheeks. You may hold your cheeks if you suspect you are. You want the exhaled resistance to be generated from your airways, not your cheeks.

It is most important not to breathe through your nose. However, initially holding your nose with your fingers may be necessary to get the feel of proper airflow through the mouth.

Always swallow whenever you feel a buildup of saliva in your mouth.

You really want to strive for proper form, like this.

A rapid inhale, slight pause, and quick forceful exhale is the optimal technique you want to master.

Breathe relaxed, hearing that full-bodied sound of air. This is the audio feedback incentive to breathe forcefully, deeply, and correctly while breathing in and out through your **Breather**.

Now that we're done using **The Breather**, let's learn how to properly clean it.

Your **Breather** will be exposed to a quantity of saliva during training. We recommend cleaning it throughout the week and even daily if you prefer.

Do not put it in the dishwasher. The high heat cycle may damage the diaphragms and the dials and will void the warranty.

Please wash it by hand in water with a small amount of mild dishwashing soap.

Rinse your **Breather** well, shake off excess water, and air dry.

If your **Breather** is thoroughly dried, it may be stored back in the package.

Take note, the rubber diaphragms on the dials may stick from moisture build up or after drying from cleaning. Simply breath through the device once to release the moisture seal.

This concludes Lesson 02 of 03 in the Training Series.

Thanks for watching.

I'll see you in Lesson 03, where we'll learn about the Fundamental Protocol for your **Breather**.

---

# TRANSCRIPT

## LESSON 03: USING & CLEANING THE BREATHER

---

In this Lesson, we're going to teach the Foundational Protocol.

Over the years, we've found that this protocol, which includes all the lessons of this course, serves as a solid foundation for you in your progress over the upcoming months and years.

If you currently have a therapist, please share this course with them.

They can personalize it as needed to fit the treatment plan they've designed for you.

OK, to begin, let's start with a few terms we'll be referring to throughout this lesson. The first word is protocol. In this course, we define it as a set of guidelines used in developing a training plan.

A rep is a full breath in and out. For example, if you inhale and exhale, that's one rep.

A set is the number of reps done in a row.

A session is the number of sets completed in each sitting.

OK, that's it for definitions.

If I've lost you, wait. Remember, each lesson comes with downloadable materials, including the detailed clinical version of the Patient Protocol, your Training Checklist, and a Daily Journal.

All of these materials and more are available next to this video on the right-hand side of the page.

OK, now it's time for the actual training portion of this lesson. Your training will be as follows. You'll train six days a week. You pick which six.

Next, each day you'll have two sessions—one in the morning and one at night. Each session will consist of two sets and 10 reps per set. That equals 20 reps in the morning and 20 reps in the evening.

So by the end of each day, you will have completed 40 total reps using **The Breather**.

If you don't have it out already, now's a good time to take out your **Breather** so you can follow along with me during this lesson.

As you learned in [Lesson 02](#), you should always start with your pre-session checklist.

Time to get official, let's start our first session.

**Carrie:**

OK, let's get started. First, sit up straight with your shoulders relaxed like this.

OK, next I'm going to ask you to do 10 breaths through your **Breather**.

Place your hand on your stomach to check for your diaphragmatic breathing and listen for the wind sound. I'll count your 10 reps.

Now place **The Breather** between your lips— not your teeth.

Let's begin.

**Patient:**

[INHALING AND EXHALING]

**Carrie:**

One, two— remember to keep your shoulders relaxed.

Three, four— don't tense up.

Five, six, seven—pace yourself.

And pause slightly between inhale and exhale— eight. Good job.

Nine, and ten.

OK, good.

**Carrie:**

How did that feel?

**Patient:**

Good.

**Carrie:**

Did you get out of breath at all? Did you feel lightheaded?

**Patient:**

No.

**Carrie:**

OK, well it's perfectly normal in the first weeks of training.

Your body needs time to adjust to the increased exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide, of course.

And if you ever feel lightheaded, just pause for several minutes, breathing normally without **The Breather**, and then continue.

And if you feel you've rested enough, you can continue with your second set.

The first week is a critical time as your body adjusts. Many people give up at this early stage and never reap the benefits.

We know it's not easy right now, and you may want to quit as well. If you do, don't give up.

Now that you've conquered the Foundational Protocol for your **Breather**, let's start kicking it up a notch and increase the resistance levels of your **Breather**.

**Patient:**

[INHALING AND EXHALING]

**Carrie:**

How did you feel about that set? Did it feel easy?

**Patient:**

Yeah.

**Carrie:**

OK, great.

So now it may be time to increase your settings. Let's turn the inhale dial to 2 now and see how that feels during the next set.

**Patient:**

[INHALING AND EXHALING]

**Carrie:**

Did that feel good?

**Patient:**

Yeah.

**Carrie:**

OK, good.

So as you finished the 10 reps, this is the correct inhale setting for you now. If it starts to feel easy again, try to increase the setting again, maybe in a week's time.

If you can do eight or ten reps at the new setting, you know it's the correct setting. So work up to 10 reps again.

If you can't inhale vigorously within two to three seconds during each rep or if you feel your stomach going inward while inhaling, your inhalation setting may be too high.

So if you notice this, make sure to rest more in between your sets and reps during this transition phase to higher resistance, or just simply go back to a lesser inhale setting for a few days and then try at a higher setting. OK?

Now let's test your exhalation setting.

**Patient:**

[INHALING AND EXHALING]

**Carrie:**

OK, that's good.

OK, I see that you're puffing your cheeks, so this setting is too high for you.

Let's put it back one setting and try again.

**Patient:**

[INHALING AND EXHALING]

**Carrie:**

That's better. OK, that's your correct exhale setting now. So as for the inhale, try to increase the setting again next week.

Finding the right setting is all about trial and error. About once a week, try out increased resistance. You may find you're ready to increase only the inhale setting or just the exhale setting at one time.

Other times, you may be ready to increase both, while there will be times when you keep both inhale and exhale settings in the same position as the previous week.

There may be times where you'll have a break from using your **Breather**, such as during illness. When you are ready to resume training, you may find you need to decrease your resistance settings.

Relax, this is normal. You will build your resistance and reps again just as you did before.

If you have to turn to one on inhalation and one on exhalation, depending on your specific ailment, this too is OK. The important thing is to start your training again and get back to feeling your best.

It's good to take note for maximum benefits, it is often not necessary to train at the most difficult settings, even for an athlete.

Some people never make it to the highest resistance settings on the dials. That's OK.

If the highest setting you ever achieve is a 2, and you're making it to rep number 10 at 60% to 70% of your capacity while maintaining form, that's great.

The most important thing is that respiratory muscle training becomes a part of your regular life. Try to build your sessions into your daily routine to maintain strong respiratory muscles for the rest of your life.

Remember, whatever you do, don't stop training. You've trained too hard and come too far to stop, so keep it up. Like all exercise training programs, with RMT, you have to use it, or you lose it.

To keep up the training motivation, it's a good idea and very rewarding to keep track of your daily progress and record it in the downloadable Training Journal included in this course.

Or, you could go one step further and take part in research to help move the ball forward in respiratory health care worldwide by monitoring your progress in the Respiratory Training Target Database.

If you're on our website, the link is on the right side of the page, or just go to [PNMedical.com](https://PNMedical.com) to find it. There, you can evaluate the impact your respiratory muscle training has on your breathing, exercise capacity, speech, and swallow function, your sleep, and your quality of life.

For optimal benefits, start using the Training Database within the first week of using your **Breather**, and then check in about once a month to record your progress.

This concludes [Lesson 03](#). Congratulations, you've completed the training course.

We'd like to end by offering you access to additional bonus training videos and more helpful content.

To get news about the latest research, to register your **Breather**, to be the first to know about new treatment protocols, and to watch the Shortcuts to Respiratory Hygiene, and more Bonus Lessons, become a VIP member of **The Breather Club** for free.

If you're watching this from our website, the link to join **The Breather Club** can be found to the right of this video. If not, just go to [PNMedical.com](https://PNMedical.com) to find it.

We hope you found this training course helpful. And if you have any feedback or have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us.

You can email [care@pnmedical.com](mailto:care@pnmedical.com), or call 877-414-4449 . We would love to hear your suggestions and provide you with more tools to help you on your voyage to improve your respiratory health.