



## Vagus Nerve Exercises

Your vagus nerve is the “hub” to parasympathetic (resting and digesting) nervous system. When we experience chronic distress, acute distress, trauma, etc. Our parasympathetic nervous system gets dominated by our sympathetic nervous system and the vagus nerve becomes less active. This causes and/or contributes to digestion problems, fatigue, dizziness, nausea, and more. The following are exercises that help get the tone of the vagus nerve back up and functioning appropriately!

1. Gargle vigorously 3 times per day. Twice while brushing your teeth and once in the middle of the day. Gargle vigorously enough that you cause yourself to tear up 10-30sec.
  - a. As a bonus, gargle with peppermint oil, peppermint activated vagal nerve receptors in the back of our mouths.
2. Gag yourself. As odd as this sounds, a slight gag instantly increases vagal tone. This can be done after brushing your teeth as well – twice per day.
3. Extended swallowing: Stick your tongue out, protrude your neck out past your shoulders and tilt your head back and try to swallow. Do this 4-5 times before or after steps 1 & 2.
4. Sing! Sing loudly! We're all Grammy winners in the car and shower!
5. 1:2 breathing. For every second you take breathing in, you should take two seconds breathing out. Example: If it take 3 seconds breathing in, take 6 seconds breathing out.
6. Apply heat to your abdomen. Ideally moist heat. \*Do not use an electrically charged heating pad and water. Only apply heat for 15-20 minutes at a time.
7. Massage 1” behind the angle of your jaw (the part of your jaw that turns from going downward to forward facing) on both sides for even amount of time. You can gently massage with your hands, or run a handheld massage device for 1-3min on each side
8. Massage where your clavicles and first 2 ribs meet your sternum for 1-3min on each side.

\*Seek medical advice before performing any of the above if you are not a patient of HML Chiropractic and Functional Care. This is not a replacement for any medical treatment for any medical conditions you may or may not have.