# STRESS MANAGEMENT and the BUTEYKO METHOD

"Better breathing means less stress and better health, double benefits!"

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Buteyko
Institute of Breathing & Health

## Buteyko for Stress Management – A Breath of Fresh Air!

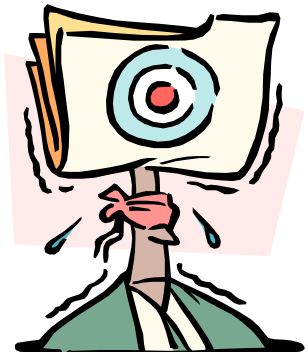
A Russian, Prof. Konstantin Pavlova Buteyko, developed a fully researched and tested system over 20 years ago and introduced to the West in the early 90's in Australia & New Zealand. Called the Buteyko Method it has helped tens of thousands of people to improve their health and reduce their susceptibility to daily stressors.
Although often associated with the treatment of asthma it is equally effective for a whole range of health problems, which have the common feature of chronic hyperventilation, usually brought on over a period of time by chronic stress.

**Prof. Konstantin Pavlova Buteyko**,

One of the major contributory causes of medical conditions, especially in the West, is stress. Chronic stress, the kind that is on going, is increasing to almost epidemic proportions. A recent study showed over 70% of people in the UK is suffering to a greater or lesser degree from stress. According to medical research, up to 80% of medical conditions may be attributed to stress.

### Work stress tied to higher depression risk.

A number of studies have found health risks associated with chronic job stress, including high blood pressure and heart disease, as well as depression. However, the depression studies have been limited to either certain occupations or single companies, noted Dr. Emma Robertson Blackmore, the lead author of the new study and an assistant professor of psychiatry at the University of Rochester Medical School in New York.
SOURCE: American Journal of Public Health, November 2007.



## Management & Stress

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) reported in 1999 that estimated work-related stress cost the UK employers between £353 and £381 million per annum, and society between £3.7 and £3.8 billion. Since then the number of days lost through stress has more than doubled (Jones, Hodgson & Price 2003)
UK employers are increasingly recognising that it makes good business sense to identify & reduce the problem of workplace stress.
Today stress-related absence costs UK employers over £7 million pa and society an estimated £7.5 billion pa.
On average each stress related absence involves 29 working days lost, a total of 13 million days

***"Yet another management responsibility placed on an already overburdened management."***

Employers are increasingly urged to rectify this problem by better work place practices, yet another management responsibility placed on an already overburdened management. An alternative and complementary approach would be to offer employees the opportunity to deal with their stress coping strategies better.

This puts some of the responsibility back onto the employee, which is reasonable since the benefits of better stress management will extend into their life outside the workplace.

The Buteyko Method provides such an individually based approach and has a proven record of health benefits that would further reduce absenteeism through sickness for those suffering from a wide range of other health problems.

For more information & courses
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www.buteykokent.co.uk

## Stress Management

There are many approaches to stress management, usually all of them give some benefit but few have perhaps been researched so much and so successful as those using improved breathing as part of the system.
The rational behind this is quite simple. It is almost impossible to be feel stressed if our breathing is normal, increased stress reactions invariably involve increased breathing as one element of the "fight flight" autonomic reflex.
Other effects of this "flight fight" reflex include increased blood pressure, increased sweating, reduced immune response, reduced digestive activity, increased adrenaline production, and a host of symptoms and conditions associated with chronic effects of prolonged stress. Chronic stress is now afflicting over 70% of people in the UK and is increasing in the workplace. 74% in 2006 compared with 68% in 2003.
If suffering such daily stress were all, many could accept it as part of our modern lifestyle but the consequences of this chronic stress are too serious to ignore. According to many medical sources there are over a hundred medical conditions either strongly associated with or caused by chronic stress.
Some of the common problems that have been shown to relate to stress include:
Panic attacks, hypertension, IBS, ME, CFS, asthma, sleep a [apnoea, headaches, eczema. psoriasis, angina, heart conditions, sleep problems, snoring, hypoglycaemia, hay fever, sinusitis, depression, anxiety etc.

## The Buteyko Approach

To tell someone who is stressed to calm down will usually have little or no effect. Our body's reaction to stressors is often unconscious and we seem to have little or no control over this.
With the Buteyko Method this problem is bypassed The instructions and training enable people to increasingly take better control of their breathing and as a consequence their reactions to stressors become less. Their stress is reduced.
In addition the physiological benefits go far beyond stress reduction, a multitude of related symptoms and conditions show considerable improvement. These conditions include asthma, hypertension, sleep apnoea, depression, panic attacks, skin problems, ME, insomnia, headaches digestive disorders etc.
A case of BOGOF as the marketers would say!

### Panic Attacks May Hike Heart Disease Risk in Women

"Women who reported at least one panic attack were at higher risk of having cardiovascular illness and death after an average of five years of follow-up. Even after controlling for other risk factors, a panic attack remained an independent risk factor on its own," said study author Dr. Jordan Smoller, an associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School.

October 2007Archives of General Psychiatry,

### Buteyko Helps Control Stress

Buteyko works by retraining breathing to conserve the carbon dioxide in your body, and by giving you techniques you can use at the first signs of stress.

Buteyko challenges the idea that deep breathing solves stress-related problems. In an effort to avoid the symptoms, people frequently start to keep away from anything that stimulates breathing such as hot stuffy rooms, caffeine or highly charged emotions. This sounds like good advice, but in reality you are shutting yourself off from life, and in the extreme you could become agoraphobic.

Restoring normal breathing patterns so that you are less likely to have an attack in the first place is the best way to overcome this problem

### Check Your Own Breathing

Check your own breathing, sitting comfortably, make sure you are breathing quietly and normally for a minute through your nose. Keep the mouth closed, on an out-breath, lightly nip your nose and hold your breath until you feel you want to breathe again, release the nose and ensure you return to normal depth and rhythm of breathing immediately afterwards. You shouldn't need to take a large in-breath or deeper breath, if you do, you have held your breath too long. You're trying to establish what is called the Control Pause, how long you can *comfortably* hold your breath after a normal out-breath. Check below to see how good your breathing is:

| CP | Your Breathing |
|---|---|
| 45-60 seconds | Excellent |
| 35-45 | Good, not perfect |
| 25-35 | Over breathing |
| 15-25 | Hyperventilating |
| 10-15 | Serious hyperventilating |
| 5-10 | Very poor breathing |

Normally participants on the Buteyko training courses double their CP by the end of the course. Some with long-standing breathing problems may take longer, but everyone can show considerable improvements.

## Buteyko for Stress

Any stress or fright will trigger the 'fight or flight' mechanism that leads to increased breathing (hyperventilation), but without increased physical activity (running or fighting) this causes a drop in carbon dioxide ($CO_2$) levels in the body.

This has two main physiological effects, first, as the blood becomes more alkaline, less oxygen is released to the tissue cells and more lactic acid is produced causing the breathing sensors in the brain to increase the breathing rate.

Secondly, the low $CO_2$ levels cause smooth muscle throughout the body to spasm. Blood vessels, so affected, narrow reducing the flow of blood to the brain, for every 1mm of Hg pressure reduction of $CO_2$ the brain receives two per cent less blood flow (Raichle 1972).

This combined with the Bohr Effect (reduced release of oxygen from the blood), can mean the brain may receive up to 50% less oxygen, which is a major stress that can result in feelings of extreme panic (Ley 1994).

The brain reacts by stimulating more breathing and if hyperventilation continues the person faints.

Once this happens the brain releases opiates and the breathing slows. (Danavi-Saubie 1978)

Raichle ME Hypertension & cerebral blood flow. Stroke 1972 3. pp566-575
Danavit-Saubie M Effect on opiates & metionine-enkephalin.. Brain Res. 1978 155 pp55-67

**Anger, chronic stress tied to heart disease**

For both men and women, chronic stress seemed to drive up the risk of progressing to heart disease. They were 68 percent more likely to develop coronary heart disease than men and women who reported low or moderate stress levels.

:Annals of Family Medicine, Sept/Oct 2007.

**SPECIAL OFFER**

Group Training (Max.10 persons)

Normally £3400 for five sessions of 90 minutes over two to three weeks, £340 per person. (Includes telephone support, workbooks, & textbook) Any location in Kent or Sussex on your own company's premises. **£3000**

**Individuals (On set courses)**
**£340 per person**

## Theory of Buteyko

Chronic stress leads to chronic hyperventilation syndrome CHVS

Medical literature on CHVS reveals that:

1. Doctors rarely diagnose the disorder or even look for CHVS as a diagnostic option .
2. When identified, treatment of CHVS is not well developed.
3. Prevalence has been found to be between 6 and 11% in outpatient populations, this excludes patients with asthma, thus it is more like 20% as there are 5.1 million asthma sufferers in the UK, representing approx 10% of the population. Some authorities suggest almost 90% of people in the West hyperventilate.
4. Symptoms and diseases associated with CHVS include: hyperglycaemia, poor oxygenation of tissue due to Bohr effect, elevated lipids, palpitations, cardiac arrythmias, cerebral vascular constriction, stenosis of coronary artery, elevated blood pressure, hiatus hernia, irritable bowel syndrome, spastic colon, Raynaud's disease, renal colic, genito-urinary disturbances, burnout, post traumatic stress disorder, sleep disturbances, migraines, muscle spasm, muscular stiffness and aching, paresthesia, seizures and epileptic fits, visual disturbances, panic attacks, phobias, anxiety, auditory disturbances, dizziness, dypnoea, asthma, shortness of breath, and many more.

## What is Taught

Buteyko is a simple education programme aimed at reversing chronic hyperventilation. Chronic Hyper-Ventilation Syndrome (CHVS) has been a neglected, misunderstood or poorly treated field of medicine for half a century. The debate continues while the millions of patients suffer, often unnecessarily, from associated symptoms and illnesses ranging from low energy and poor sleep through anxiety and allergies to hypertension and asthma.

The lessons taught:

The importance of nose breathing.

Simple nose clearing exercises.

How to measure their own level of chronic hyperventilation on a regular basis.

How to reverse chronic hyper-ventilation with deliberately reduced breathing exercises.

Lifestyle changes that help further reduce breathing and promote health through, amongst other things advising non-stressful exercise and eating less.

Practical, safe and effective tips for avoiding mouth breathing at all times.

That Buteyko only complements good medical treatment.