

# Exercises for Posture and Breathing

At the October session “Practical Strategies for Living with MG,” physical therapist Brittany White explained that posture exercises can help with breathing, speaking, and swallowing. Ms. White commented, “When our posture is good, many other things become easier.” She also noted the pursed lip breathing exercise below helps MG patients because it can “improve respiratory endurance.” Keep in mind that a person always should check with their doctor before beginning a new exercise regimen.

**Scapular Retractions:** From a seated or standing position, position your arms 90 degrees at your side. Squeeze your shoulder blades together, sticking your chest out and return to start position. Be sure your shoulders aren’t just going back, but are pushing downward. Perform 3 sets of 10 repetitions each with a 2-3 second hold on the squeeze.



**Chin Tucks:** Sitting in a relaxed position with head upright and shoulders back. Keeping your chin level, and eyes forward, simply draw your head back. Make sure not to dip your head down as you do this. This is strengthening your deep neck flexor muscles to help counter-balance the “forward head position” many of us have. Hold this position for about 10 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

**Pursed Lip Breathing:** Relax your neck and shoulders. Breathe in slowly through your nose for two counts. “Purse” (or pucker) your lips as if you were going to whistle. Breathe out slowly and gently through your pursed lips while counting to four.



*“Great posture never goes out of style.”*

*- Cindy Ann Peterson, My Style, My Way: Top Experts Reveal How to Create Yours Today*

## Preparing for Flu Season

With colder weather comes flu season. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against this serious disease.



The CDC notes that some groups should especially get the flu vaccine because they are at higher risk for severe complications if they get the flu. This includes those who have chronic neurological disorders and those who are taking immune suppressant medications. The CDC recommends that these groups avoid the nasal spray vaccine because it is made with a live virus.