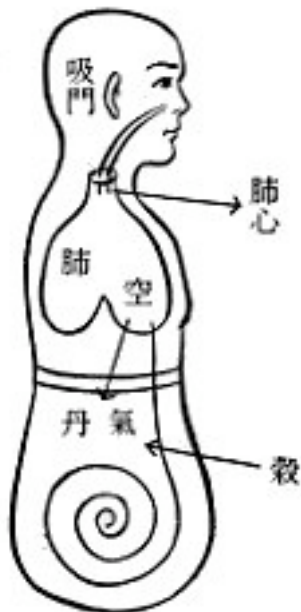


## Dan Jun Breathing Techniques

Breathing is something we all do everyday all the time. Normally we pay little or no attention to our breathing, yet we do have control over it, to some degree. One thing which we rarely do is exhale all the way. Much of the air in our lungs is not circulated very well. Under regular circumstances we use no more than about 1/3 of our lung capacity, the rest is basically stale air. Even when we run or do activities which cause us to breathe heavily, we use less than 75% percent of the total capacity of our lungs.

The Dan Jun is a Korean term for the center of the human body. It is also the storage spot for Ki energy or vital life force. It is located about two to three inches below the navel. When you learn to breathe to and from this point in the body you will begin to notice great changes in your health and your life. But, like anything else it must be practiced and used to be of any value.

Dan Jun or Tan Tien in Chinese, is often pictured as a fire pot or stove in the lower abdomen. This represents the engine or power source of the human body. The illustration below shows how the breathe also brings energy into the Dan Jun.



Dan Jun breathing can be very simply explained as breathing from the stomach. In other words instead of your chest rising and falling with each breath, your stomach rises and falls. This action allows

your lungs to fill more completely and also helps them to empty them more completely. The result is better oxygenation of the blood, and better flow of chi or ki, the vital life force energy. Regular practice of Dan Jun breathing can slow the aging process, revitalize the body, and slowly reverse the effects of many diseases and physical conditions.

A few cautions before we begin with the Dan Jun breathing techniques. First this type of breathing should not be done when you have been drinking alcohol, or when you are taking some prescription drugs. Also if you have breathing disorders or problems you should check with your doctor before trying these breathing techniques, usually there are no problems. It is most advisable to practice these techniques in the morning hours, as this is the time of day when you can do the body the most good.

## **Basic Technique**

Start by sitting in a position in which your spine is very straight. The body should be relaxed, not tense. Begin by forcing, slowly, all of the air out of your lungs by pulling your stomach in and forcing the air out from the bottom of the lungs. At the end you can bend forward slightly to force even more air out. Next relax and allow your lungs to fill slowly, through the nose, while expanding your stomach. Take a good deep breath and hold it for 10–20 seconds before releasing in the same manner, slowly. You should increase the inhale, exhale, and hold time as it becomes more comfortable for you to do so. At first you should do no more than 10 minutes of this breathing. Eventually this type of breathing can be combined with a series of movements called "Medicinal Training" or "Koukzendo". These movements combined with the Dan Jun breathing can do much for the over all health of the body no matter what the physical condition, age, or health. It is also good to practice this technique before and or during meditation for clearing the mind.

Remember that this is only the beginning of these techniques. They get much more in depth later, but should be learned under the supervision of a qualified instructor. The higher techniques, while difficult to describe, are easy to demonstrate and do with some practice.