

What is a Vagus Nerve?

The vagus nerve is a bundle of nerve fibers that stretch from the brain stem down into the colon. It's called "vagus" because it **wanders like a vagabond** from the back of the neck down into the digestive system, found on the right and left sides of your body connecting your major organs. When this nerve is stimulated, it **activates your body's relaxation response** to help deal with **stress** and a wide range of other conditions. It also plays a huge role in the **mind-body connection**.

Your nervous system can be divided into two parts: **Sympathetic and Parasympathetic**. The sympathetic part increases your **heart rate, breathing, blood pressure, alertness and energy levels** when needed, while the parasympathetic part decreases them. The sympathetic side is often called the "**fight or flight**" system, while the parasympathetic side is referred to as the "**rest and digest**" system.

The vagus nerve operates mainly within the parasympathetic nervous system linking major organ activity to the brain. According to *Medical News Today*, its 4 main functions are:

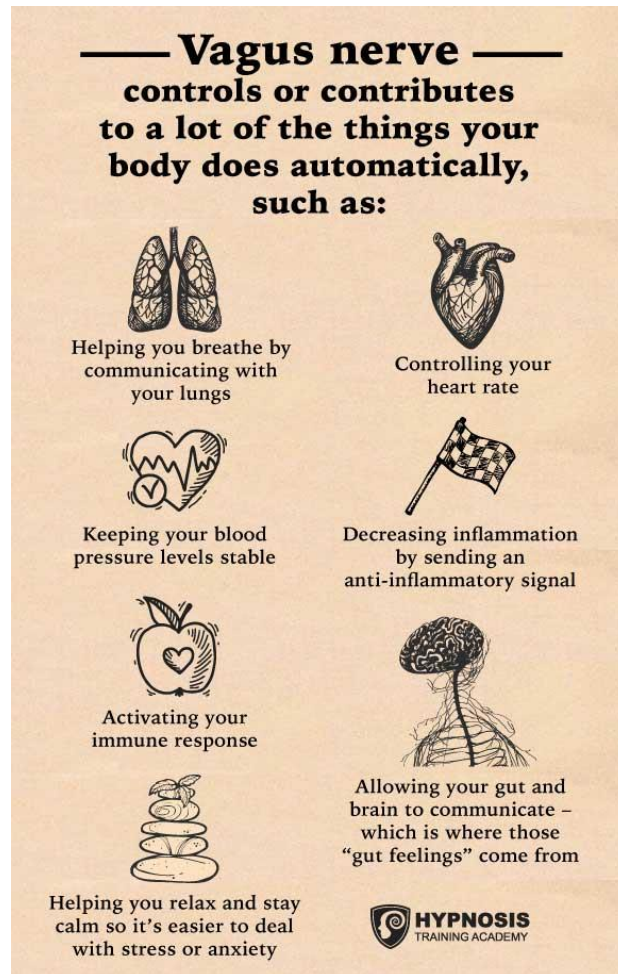
1. **Sensory** – providing sensory information from the throat, heart, lungs and abdomen
2. **Special sensory** – providing taste sensation behind the tongue
3. **Motor** – providing movement for neck muscles so you can swallow and speak
4. **Parasympathetic** – responsible for your digestive tract, respiration and heart rate functioning

As you can see, it plays a crucial role when it comes to the well-being of your body!

It does this by communicating with various organs by **sending out signals** using the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. These signals are vital in order to keep your body working properly. If your brain was unable to communicate with your lungs, for instance, then you wouldn't be able to breathe.

While the sympathetic nervous system controls the fight or flight response, sending out **stress-releasing hormones like adrenaline and cortisol** so you can take action.

The vagus nerve does the opposite: **helping you get rid of stress and remain calm**. The more things you do to stimulate the vagus nerve, the more relaxed and less stressed you'll feel. That's what happens when people meditate or chant mantras over and over, or when they're deeply involved in prayers. Their breathing rate synchronizes itself to an optimum level that activates the vagus nerve and promotes relaxation.



Conditions Affected Positively & Negatively by the Vagus Nerve

While stimulation of the vagus nerve is thought to be a good thing, like any other part of the human body, it can also malfunction. If that happens it can result in a variety of different issues, such as:

- Fainting
- Mood disorders
- Obesity
- Difficulty swallowing
- Gastrointestinal diseases
- Chronic inflammation
- B12 deficiency
- Seizures

On the other hand, vagus nerve stimulation improves certain conditions, including:

- Alcohol addiction
- Cancer

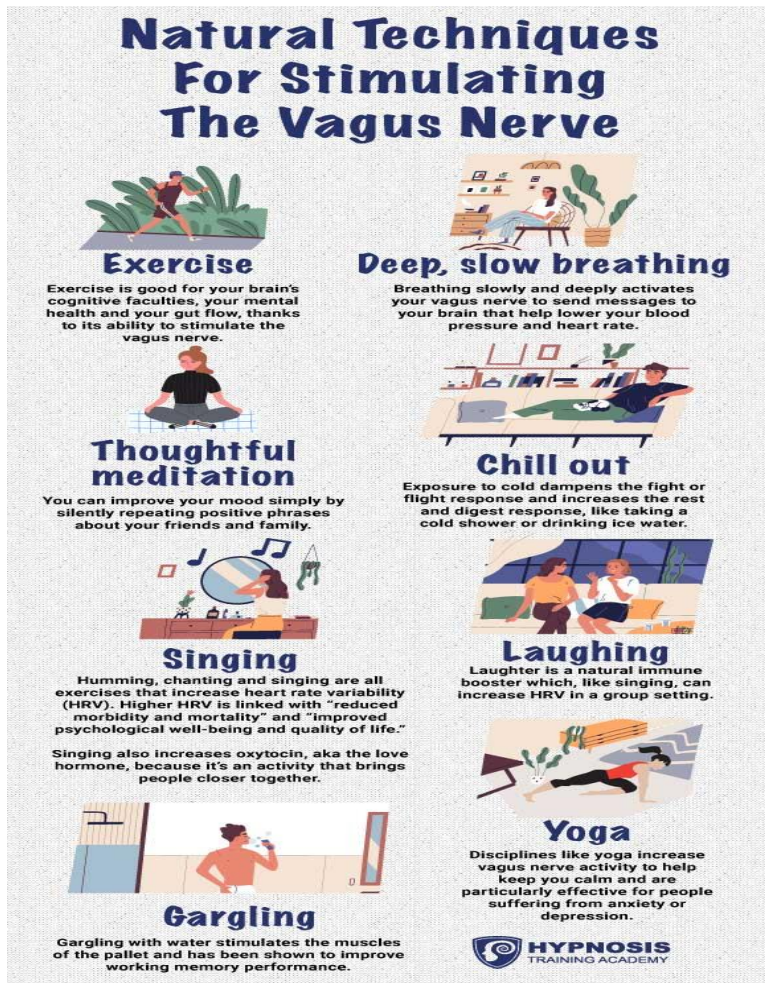
- Alzheimer's
- Mood disorder
- Anxiety disorder
- Heart disease
- Migraines
- Leaky gut
- Tinnitus
- Poor blood circulation

Doctors use a special technique to stimulate the vagus nerve, sending electrical energy pulses to the brain via the nerve. According to [Uplift Connect](#), this vagus nerve stimulation (or VNS) has been shown to be an effective way to treat epilepsy, depression and arthritis. And for epilepsy patients it had an added benefit of helping to improve their mood.

VNS is done using a device similar to a pacemaker, and only with the proper medical supervision, of course. But there are lots of natural ways to stimulate the vagus nerve as well.

Natural Techniques for Stimulating the Vagus Nerve

The vagus nerve can be strengthened and toned like a muscle, just by using it more often. And when you do, you'll be improving your health at the same time. Here are some simple and completely natural ways to naturally stimulate the vagus nerve:



Deep breathing has long been associated with relaxation, and the fact that it stimulates the vagus nerve helps to explain why that happens. It also helps us understand why hypnosis is such a great way to stimulate the nerve and contribute to your overall health and well-being.

The Link Between Vagus Nerve and Hypnosis

Brain research scientists believe that the vagus nerve is the “**communication superhighway**” linking the conscious and unconscious minds. The vagus nerve links the brain stem to the heart, lungs and gut. As part of the *parasympathetic nervous system*, it controls unconscious body functions such as **breathing, heart rate, digestion of food and sweating**.

It also helps to regulate *blood pressure*, to stimulate saliva production and contributes to taste and tear production. A properly functioning vagus nerve is **crucial for good emotional and physical health**.

When someone is hypnotized, the hypnotist begins by getting them to relax. This can be accomplished by asking them to focus on their breathing or by using a variety of induction

techniques. After a while, the person's breathing becomes slower and more regular before they enter a hypnotic trance. This kind of breathing helps to **stimulate the vagus nerve**.