



Horse Breather

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Comfort Breather – the easy way to help your breathing

Using a Comfort Breather or dust mask is a really easy and effective way of improving your own breathing. This article gives some ideas on how to do this. The suggestions apply to ordinary DIY dust masks as well as Comfort Breathers but I just use 'Comfort Breather' to cover both and keep the words down.

Comfort Breathers have several advantages over dust masks but if you have not used either before, I suggest you get a cheap, soft dust mask – one without a valve or filter (see right) to try to start with. If you can't find a suitable one you could use two surgical masks on top of each other. If you find the masks helpful you can then buy a Comfort Breather which is slightly more effective than many dust masks, more comfortable, washable, long lasting and better value.

Basic guidelines

- Wear the Comfort Breather an hour on the first day, at a time when you are relaxed
- Increase the length of time in the Comfort Breather by half an hour a day unless you experience clearings (see 1N instructions) in which case have a day off.
- After a week of use, start to gradually increase the level of exercise that you do in the Comfort, for example from watching tv, to working on the computer, cooking, walking, housework then more strenuous activities such as picking up the poops, grooming and riding.

Specific uses

Relief of symptoms

If you have symptoms arising from for example a cold, or cough; or chronic ailments such as hay fever or allergies, wear the Comfort to bring relief. Coughing, sneezing, sore throat, runny / blocked nose, yawning fits, sighing etc can often be controlled surprisingly quickly.

Sleep problems and night time use

If you have problems sleeping or symptoms that are worse at night, try wearing the Comfort overnight (once you have built up to a sufficient length of time in your Breather).

This is where the softness of the Comfort Breather has an advantage over most dust masks. Surgical masks are also comfortable but less effective.

Coping with stress

If you are going through a stressful situation, wear the Comfort Breather to help reduce breathing and counter the raised adrenaline production. You may find this is enough to enable you to cope and function better.

Improving riding fitness

It can be quite informative to wear the Comfort Breather whilst riding. If you find it difficult at first and feel like you need to take it off, it's an indication that your breathing gets worse when you ride.



Comfort Breather



suitable dust mask

“ We like your Comfort Breathers very much and therefore we would like to order additional 4 Breathers so we can have one upstairs and one downstairs in the house...or when they need to be washed or so.

Justin was sick (flu with very bad cough) and he was wearing the Comfort Breather very well. When his coughing was so bad he said "Mum, can I PLEASE have the breather"....:-) ... I didn't expect that... But it helped him, he noticed it and we didn't need chemical medication!! “

Barbara, IGM Stables, Austria

There are two options. If you would like to learn more about your riding technique and its effect on your body (and probably therefore on your horse's body) try this. Put on the Comfort Breather. Get on your horse and notice whether this is uncomfortable for your breathing. If it is then just sit quietly until the discomfort passes. Ideally have someone do 1N on your horse for the duration so that they too are relaxing.

Start riding in your normal routine, say, for example simple walking without transitions. If this is ok move on to your next level of activity, say, figures (turns and circles). If you feel uncomfortable you have discovered that this level of activity is hard for your breathing and is therefore not beneficial for your physiology.

Try reducing the level of activity back to one that is comfortable for your breathing in the Comfort Breather. For example take longer gaps / rests between figures or even just stop and wait, until you get to a level that you can accomplish without breathing discomfort.

If you continue to use the Comfort Breather it will improve your breathing and fitness and you will gradually be able to increase the level of activity you can easily achieve for example from walk, to trot, canter, gallop, dressage and jumping and so on.

This is a great opportunity for someone who is specifically interested in understanding and improving their riding abilities. Improved breathing results in benefits of interest to dressage, endurance and jump riders, and performers in other disciplines.

Benefits include enhanced fitness (slower to go into anaerobic respiration, quicker to recover), better muscle functioning (suppleness) and better brain functioning (calmness, concentration, decision making).

Wearing the Comfort does 2 things. It improves the breathing at the time of use, but also, with consistent use like any training, gradually improves the overall general fitness level and physiology.

For the rider less interested in the fine details, the second option may be more suitable. Simply build up use of the Comfort Breather at other times as per the basic guidelines above. Start with times when you are relaxed and gradually build up to longer periods of increased activity such as walking, housework, doing the poops etc. Periodically try riding in the Comfort and when you find it has become comfortable start building up the length of time you ride in it.

Use as a dust mask

The Comfort Breather works quite well against large size dust particles so is a good idea if you are mucking out stables. It will also reduce symptoms of hay fever although it does this more by making the body less hypersensitive to pollen than by actually filtering much of the pollen. Pollen is simply too small to be trapped by the Comfort Breather. But the effect is still helpful.

If you are embarrassed to wear a Comfort Breather in public then wearing it overnight is a good alternative.

You may have to put up with lots of jokes about Michael Jackson but as the benefits of better breathing include improved fitness, stamina, focus, attention, calmness, health, sleep and performance; you will have the last laugh.



to buy a Comfort Breather go to
www.equinebreathing.com
'products and courses' page