

Home remedies: having a bout with hiccups

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Hiccups may result from a large meal, alcoholic beverages or sudden excitement. In some cases, hiccups may be a sign of an underlying medical condition. For most people, a bout of hiccups usually lasts only a few minutes. Rarely, hiccups may persist for months. This can result in malnutrition and exhaustion.

Hiccups are involuntary contractions of the diaphragm—the muscle that separates your chest from your abdomen and plays an important role in breathing. Each contraction is followed by a sudden closure of your [vocal cords](#), which produces the characteristic "hic" sound.

Although there's no certain way to stop hiccups, if you have a bout of hiccups that lasts longer than a few minutes, the following home remedies may provide relief, although they are unproven:

- Breathe into a paper bag
- Gargle with ice water
- Hold your breath
- Sip cold water

You may be able to decrease the frequency of hiccups by avoiding common hiccup triggers, such as:

- Eating large meals
- Drinking carbonated beverages or alcohol
- Sudden changes in temperature

- Excitement or emotional stress

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