

Excuse me Please Questions

Directions: Read each questions then answer them using complete sentences.

First Reading:

1. Why do we burp?
2. What 2 muscles involve your breathing?
3. Why do we get hiccups?
4. What is the best way to stop hiccups.

Read the article below: What is the longest case of the hiccups after.

5. How long did he have the hiccups?
6. How many times did they estimate that he hiccupped in that time?
7. Why did he have to use a blender on his food later in life?

Hiccups: Things Get Out of Synch

Hiccups can be worse than burps. Burps are how your stomach gets rid of extra air. Once you get them, you think they'll never end! Hiccups are a sign that your breathing is out of synch. To understand why hiccups happen, you have to know something about how the respiratory system works.

Respiration involves two main types of muscles—the rib, or intercostal, muscles and the diaphragm, which lies at the base of your lungs. Normally, these two muscle groups work together like a well-synchronized machine. When you inhale, the intercostal muscles contract, and your rib cage moves up and out. The diaphragm moves down and flattens. This makes room for air in your lungs. A moment later, when you exhale, the diaphragm and intercostal muscles relax, forcing air out of the lungs. Hiccups happen when the diaphragm contracts and pushes down at the wrong time, forcing air to move quickly past the vocal cords. Your brain says, “Wait a minute!” It sends a message to the tongue and the back of your throat to stop that air. When air is forced across the vocal cords in the back of your mouth, the cords snap shut. You make a funny sound, called a hiccup. People try many things to stop the hiccups. Some people eat a spoonful of sugar. Some breathe into a bag. Others believe the cure is to hold their breath and drink water. The best thing to do is just breath normal.

CHARLES OSBORNE HAD THE HICCUPS FOR 68 YEARS, FROM 1922 TO 1990

Today I found out Charles Osborne (1894-1991) had the hiccups non-stop for approximately 68 years, from 1922 to June 5th, 1990. According to the Guinness Book of World Records, this is the longest bout of the hiccups ever recorded.

His hiccups first started in 1922 while weighing a hog for slaughter. As he says, “I was hanging a 350 pound hog for butchering. I picked it up and then I fell down. I felt nothing, but the doctor said later that I busted a blood vessel the size of a pin in my brain.” The result being that he damaged a small part of his brain that inhibits the hiccup response, according to Dr. Terence Anthoney who treated Osborne later in life. In the beginning, Osborne’s hiccups occurred at a rate of around 40 times per minute on average. Throughout his life, this gradually slowed to about 20 hiccups per minute until they finally stopped mysteriously about



one year before his death in 1991. It is estimated that he hiccuped over 430 million times in his lifetime!

Eventually, he learned to suppress most of the noise of a typical hiccup by breathing methodically between hiccups, which was a technique taught to him by doctors at the Mayo Clinic.

The fact that he kept his sanity through this is amazing enough, but apparently he led a pretty normal life. He married twice over his long life (lived to the ripe age of 97) with the second wife marrying him despite the hiccups (he did not have the hiccups when he got married the first time). He also fathered eight children. Later in life though, he was forced to start grinding any food he ate in a blender due to the fact that it was hard for food to reach his stomach between hiccups. Miraculously, about a year before Osborne died, his hiccups stopped. The total number of years of his life he had the hiccups was about 68 years; the total without was about 29 years divided between the first 28 years of his life and the last year.

Bonus Facts:

- Another dramatic case of the hiccups occurred in 2006 with a man named Christopher Sands who lived in Lincolnshire, England. Sands' hiccups lasted around 3 years and robbed him of his career as a musician and vocalist. His hiccups were so bad at times that he would be unable to breathe properly and would occasionally pass out from it. He also had significant difficulty in sleeping. Sands eventually received media attention in 2009 and doctors in the United States investigated and found he had a tumor in his brain stem that was causing the hiccups. After removing it, the hiccups went away.
- In 2007, Jennifer Mee of Florida hiccuped over 50 times per minute for around 35 days straight before the hiccups went away. This same girl was later arrested for murder in 2010 after taking part in a robbery.
- The Old English word for hiccup "ælsogoða" derives from the fact that it was thought hiccups were caused by elves.
- The word "hiccup" itself is an onomatopoeia that first appeared in the 18th century. Although, as early as the 16th century it was being called a "hickop" or "hicket".
- The technical name for a hiccup is a synchronous diaphragmatic flutter (SDF) or singultus. Singultus derives from the Latin "singult" which means "the act of catching one's breath while sobbing".

