

When you exercise you respire more. Muscles need more energy to ~~contract~~ contract. Cells need more oxygen. Your breathing rate and breathing volume increase to get more oxygen to the blood. In turn your heart rate increases to pump oxygenated blood around the body faster.

During vigorous exercise your body struggles to supply enough oxygen to muscles quickly enough. They start to respire anaerobically. This is not ideal as the build up of lactic acid can be painful.

This can cause oxygen debt. The body needs to repay the oxygen from earlier. An oxygen debt is the amount of extra oxygen your body needs to react with the build up of lactic acid and remove it from the cells. Oxygen and lactic acid react to form harmless CO_2 and water. This is why we breath hard after exercise.

Another way your body gets rid of lactic acid is using the blood that enters your muscles transports lactic acid back into the liver to be converted back into glucose.