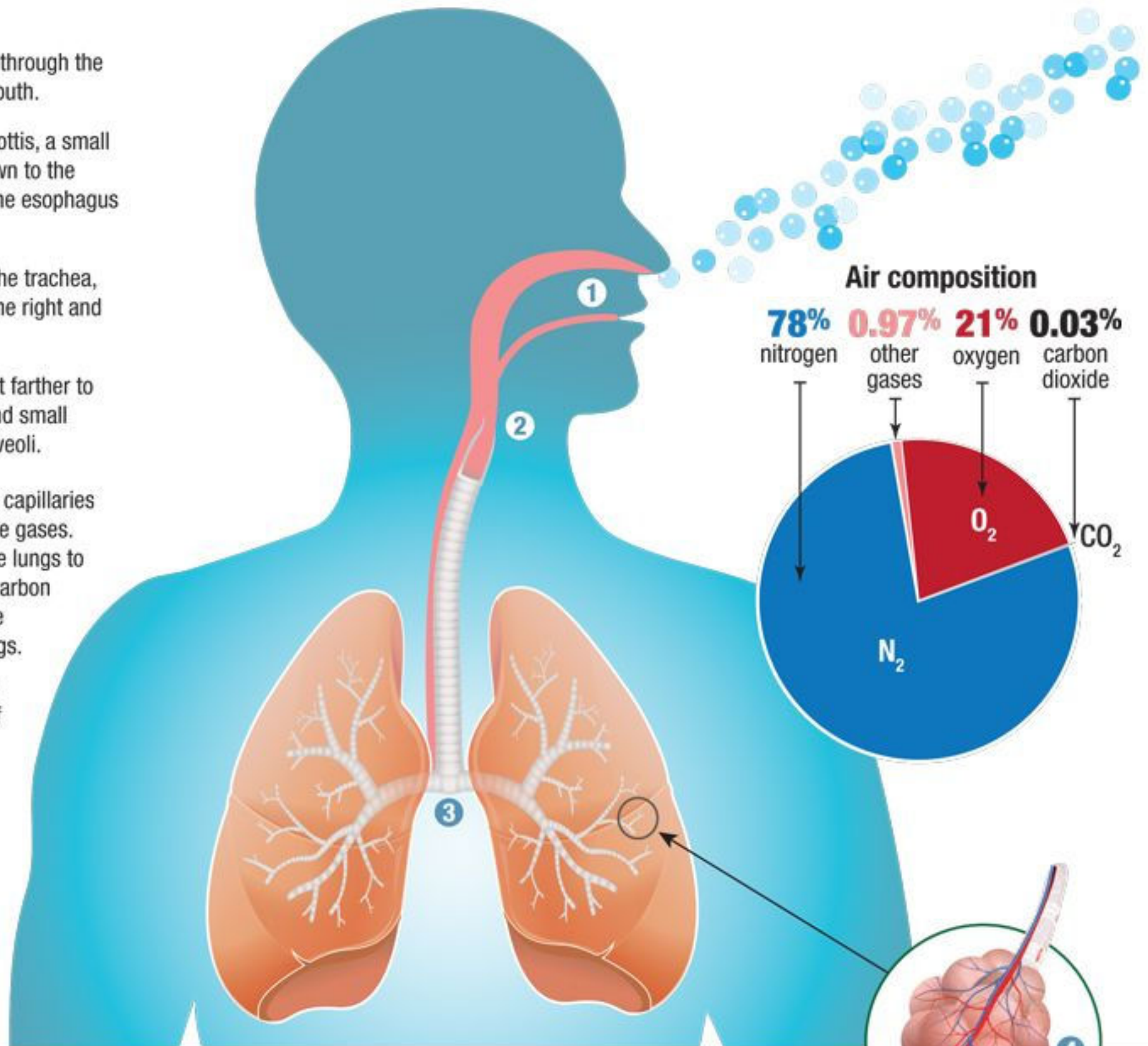


# Lungs: How Gas Exchange Works

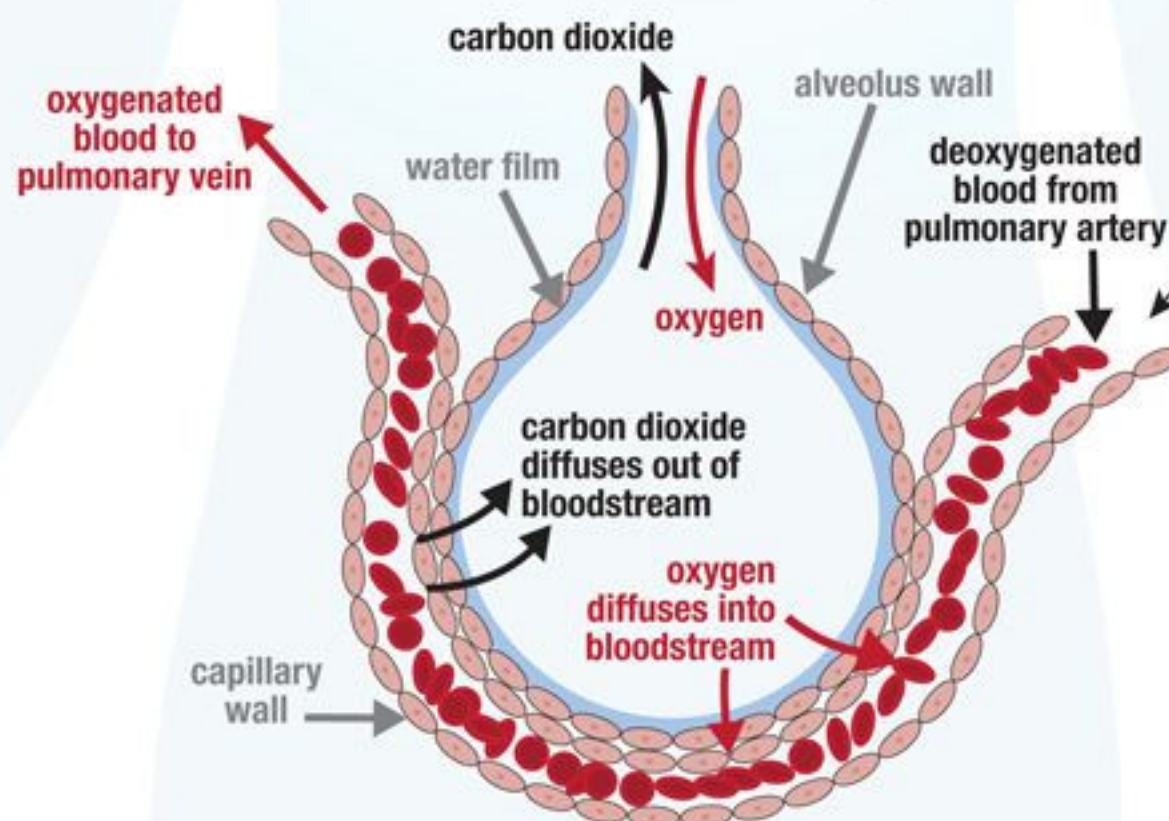
Breathing comes naturally to us, but this seemingly simple process is complex. We inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide through a process known as gas exchange.

- 1 Air flows into the body through the nasal passages and mouth.
- 2 Air passes by the epiglottis, a small flap that directs air down to the lungs and food down the esophagus to the stomach.
- 3 Air then travels down the trachea, or windpipe, and into the right and left bronchi.
- 4 These tubes branch out farther to become bronchioles and small air-filled sacs called alveoli.
- 5 Around the alveoli, tiny capillaries bring blood to exchange gases. Oxygen moves from the lungs to the bloodstream, and carbon dioxide moves from the bloodstream to the lungs.

The exchange is based on the concentration of gases in the blood compared to gases in the alveolus.



## 5 Alveolus Gas Exchange



### Did you know?



Algae produce approximately **75%** of the oxygen we breathe.