

Coughing

Effective coughing is essential in clearing your chest, but it can be very exhausting. Therefore, try to control your coughing at all times. Take a single deep breath in and cough. Only strong coughs will be effective in clearing your chest.

Where and in what position?

Do this breathing exercise in a calm and comfortable environment. Choose the following position of ease (as advised by your physiotherapist or nurse):

When do I do the breathing exercise?

This depends on how much mucus you have and when it is bothering you the most. This may, of course, vary from time to time e.g. when you have a chest infection. It is therefore important to be flexible.

Choose the following times (as advised by your physiotherapist) :

Other Advice

Please consider the following:

Issued by:

Date:

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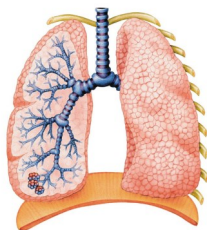
Keeping your chest clear

Breathing matters



Your local healthcare provider

Do you have a problem coughing up mucus or phlegm?



If you do, this leaflet may help you!

Mucus is normal. All healthy lungs produce mucus. It plays an important role in protecting the lungs against unwanted inhaled particles.

Mucus is produced within the airways. It is then transported back to the throat where you can cough it up.

However, due to some lung conditions the lungs produce more mucus and/or the consistency of mucus changes. Usually this is combined with difficulties in the transportation of the mucus to the throat. Coughing may then become a tiring task.

When you have problems clearing your mucus, it might cause the secretions to stagnate within the airways and get infected. It may also make you feel breathless.

It is therefore important that you clear your chest in an effective, effortless way.

This leaflet describes a breathing exercise that helps to clear mucus from your lungs efficiently, without causing you to feel exhausted at the end.

Active cycle of breathing technique

This breathing technique is a combination of three breathing components.

Gentle/relaxed/normal

This type of breathing will help you to relax your breathing and get control.

Relax your shoulders and upper chest. Place your hand on your stomach and feel it rise under your hand when you breathe in. This type of breathing should not be deep.

Deep breathing

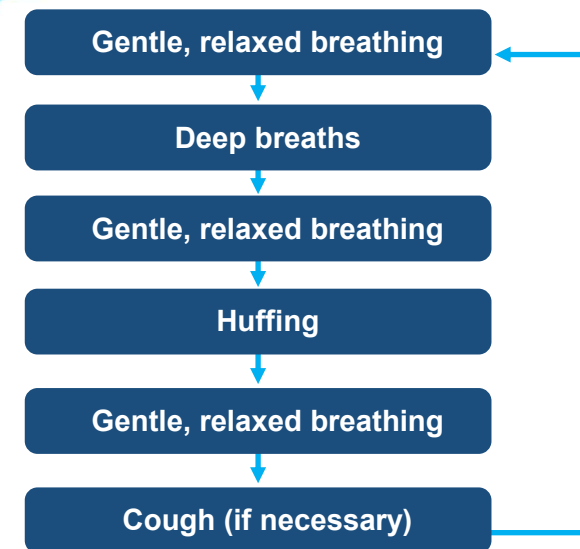
This type of breathing will result in a deeper, more efficient breathing pattern.

Take a slow, deep breath in, again feeling your tummy rise under your hand. The slower the better. Don't rush.

Huffing

Huffing is very similar to coughing, but without the same effort. Huffing helps to move the mucus up your airways.

Open your mouth and huff out as if you were trying to steam up a mirror. Do it very gently and long enough to produce a slightly "crackly" sound.



This is one 'Breathing Cycle'

And now....

Repeat the above "Breathing Cycle". Make sure that you do not force your technique at any time.

Continue the cycle until you manage two whole "cycles", without producing any mucus after coughing.

Important:

Some people immediately start coughing up their mucus, but in others it takes much longer to clear. Make sure you give it enough time.

