

Physiotherapy Department

Sputum Clearance Active Cycle of Breathing Technique (ACBT)

The ACBT is a simple pattern of breathing to:

- Loosen and clear phlegm
- Improve ventilation

During an infection or exacerbation you may produce more phlegm, which may become difficult to clear off your chest. By regularly clearing your chest and using positioning and breathing exercises, you may find these episodes easier to manage. If you have bronchodilators e.g. blue inhaler or nebuliser, use these before you start to clear your chest. It is important to have a drink of water to hand when completing airway clearance.

The ACBT consists of the following breathing exercises:

Breathing Control

Settle yourself in a relaxed position. Make sure your back is supported, while keeping your shoulders relaxed. Your physiotherapist may advise you to use an alternative position depending on your condition.

Follow the steps below:

- Rest one hand on your chest and one on your upper abdomen. You will feel your chest and abdomen rise when you breathe in and fall when you breathe out.
- Try and breathe in and out through your nose if you can.
- Now concentrate on trying to make the lower part of your chest move rather than the upper part.
- Breathe in and out at a comfortable pace. Your breathing should sound quiet and your breath out should be longer than your breath in.
- Repeat until your breathing feels settled and comfortable.

Breathing control is an essential component to allow you to rest and relax between deep breathing and huffing.

Deep Breathing

These are slow deep breaths in, through your nose, followed by relaxed breaths out. When breathing out let the air out gently. This minimises any wheezing.

Huffing

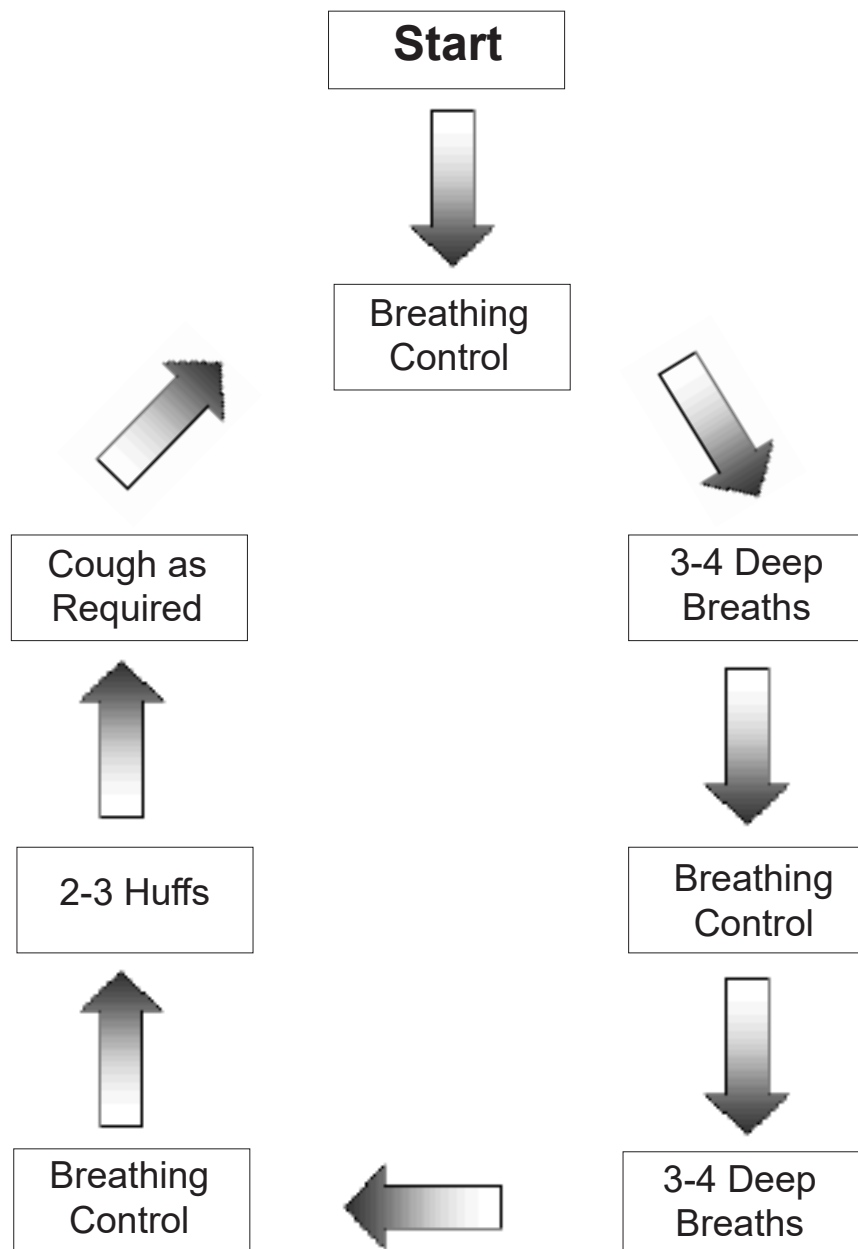
This helps remove phlegm from your lungs. To huff, take a normal breath in and force the air out keeping your mouth open, as if steaming up a mirror.

Your physiotherapist will show you how to huff from different depths of breath depending on where your phlegm is.

Coughing

This should follow huffing or deep breathing. To avoid tightening of your airways it is important to try and attempt to suppress your cough until the secretions have collected in the upper airways. Then you may be able to remove the phlegm with only a modified (small) cough or huff. If you huff do it from a big breath.

Repeat this cycle until your phlegm is cleared or you are too tired. Normally you would need to use the ACBT several times a day.



Localisation (test breath)

This is to locate where your sputum is. To do this take a full deep breath in and then breathe all the way out.

During the breath out you may hear crackles –

- At the beginning — larger (upper) airways.
- In the middle — middle airways.
- At the end — small (distal) airways.

You may also be able to locate your sputum by placing your hands on your chest and feeling where it is 'ruttling'.

Always clear your upper chest before commencing the cycle with a huff from a big breath. Your physiotherapist will show you how to move your phlegm using huffing from different depths of breath.

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Physiotherapy
Acute Inpatient Therapy
Calderdale Royal Hospital

Telephone 01422 224198

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਬ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਚੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ,
ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ یا زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو
برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم
المذكور أعلاه"