

This leaflet is available at the following locations

Cheltenham General Hospital
08454 223040

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Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
08454 228535

Moore Cottage Hospital Bourton-on-the-Water 01451 823723

Moreton District Hospital 01608 812618

St. Paul's Medical Centre 01242 215037

Tewkesbury Hospital 01684 853933

Winchcombe Hospital 01242 605203

Patient Information for the
Gloucestershire Health Community

Breathing exercises for chest clearance

This leaflet explains how you can clear your chest more effectively.

Breathing exercises may help you to clear excess secretions and improve lung function.

If done regularly, this simple technique will help you manage your own condition.

How can I clear my chest?

The active cycle of breathing techniques can be very helpful for clearing secretions and making breathing easier.

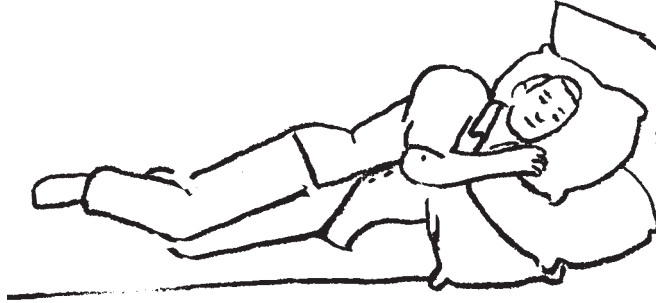
It consists of:

1. Relaxed breathing control. This is gentle breathing using the lower part of your chest, with upper chest and shoulders relaxed. This has the effect of:
 - Making breathing easier, allowing energy to be used more effectively
 - Relieving breathlessness
2. Three or four long deep breaths
3. Huffing

These techniques should be performed in the following cycle:

1. Relaxed breathing

Settle yourself in a relaxed position: sitting or side lying.



Make sure your back is supported.

Keep your upper chest and shoulders relaxed.

Rest your hand on your lower rib cage / upper abdomen.

Feel your upper abdomen rising under your hand as you breathe in and falling under your hand as you breathe out.

Concentrate on the lower part of your chest moving rather than the upper part.

- Try to breathe in through the nose and out through the nose or mouth.
- Breathe at a rate which feels comfortable, it will slow down as control is regained.

- With practice, breathing control will become easier. You will then be able to use this method at rest, when standing, on exertion or when you feel especially breathless.

2. Long deep breaths

Three or four deep breaths (slow, long breath in through the nose and relaxed breath out).

Repeat relaxed breathing

3. Huffing

One or two huffs (imagine steaming up your glasses) or cough.

Repeat relaxed breathing

Continue the sequence until the secretions are ready to be cleared.

Repeat as often as necessary until your chest feels clear and your breathing is easier.