



Chest Care for patients with respiratory conditions

Physiotherapy Department



CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD)

What does COPD stand for?

Chronic - Identifies that the disease has been present for some time.

Obstructive - Describes the blocking and, or hindering due to narrowing of the airways resulting in the air being breathed in not flowing freely. This is usually more obvious in an out of breath when the air being squeezed out through the narrowed airways may produce a wheezing sound.

Pulmonary - This includes the lungs and all the tubes, which deliver air to them (**ie, the whole respiratory system**). This system has a special lining, which continually produces mucus to keep it moist and clean.

Disease - This simply refers to illness.

The term **COPD** does not tell doctors what has caused the illness. People with chronic bronchitis, emphysema and some people with long standing asthma have **COPD**. Four common symptoms of **COPD** are : **Cough, Breathlessness, Sputum (mucus), Wheeze.**

In **COPD** the lining of the airways has been irritated in some way, which causes swelling and inflammation, and resulting production of extra sputum. Over time, the airways become permanently damaged, making the normal function of the lungs less effective.

HOW TO HELP CONTROL YOUR BREATHING

Remember

Breathlessness can be uncomfortable but is not in itself harmful or dangerous. Knowing how to control your breathing will help you to remain calm when you are short of breath. Pursed lip breathing and diaphragmatic breathing can both help when you have COPD. These breathing methods prevent or reduce the trapped air in your lungs, allowing you to breathe in more fresh air.

Pursed Lip Breathing

This type of breathing can be very useful when you are exerting yourself.

- ❖ breathe in slowly through your nose for 1 second
- ❖ purse your lips as if you are going to whistle
- ❖ breathe out gently through your pursed lips for 2 seconds
(**don't force it - let the air escape naturally**)
- ❖ keep doing this until you are not short of breath.

Nose Tummy Breathing

Nose Tummy Breathing is a very efficient way to breathe.

Rest a hand on your tummy and feel your tummy rise as you breathe in, then breathe out slowly. Pause and let the next breath come.

As you become more comfortable with this you will find that your breathing may slow and your breaths become deeper.

You can use nose tummy breathing in any position. Practicing when you feel at your best will help you to do this more easily when your breathlessness increases.

Positioning

There are a number of positions which you may find helpful when you are breathless.

Sit in a chair, or sit high up in the bed.
Drop your shoulders and let your arms go heavy.
Place your hands with your palms facing upwards on your knees.
Think about your nose tummy breathing.



Sit in a chair with a table in front of you.
Keep your back straight and lean forward with your forearms on the table.
Rest on your forearms and drop your shoulders.
Think about your nose tummy breathing.



Lie on your side whilst propped-up by pillows. Place your top arm on a pillow in front of you and your top leg on another pillow. Think about dropping your shoulders and using nose tummy breathing.



Stand and lean forward resting your forearms on a work surface or high windowsill. Drop your shoulders and think about nose tummy breathing.



Some people find lying on their tummy can help their breathlessness. Only try this if you are normally comfortable lying in this position and can move from lying on your back to lying on your tummy easily.



Quick Relaxation

If you feel stressed or panicked you can try this quick exercise:

STOP	STOP the activity you are doing
DROP	DROP your shoulders DROP your jaw slightly
FLOP	Think about letting your body FLOP Carry out your nose tummy breathing

HOW TO CLEAR YOUR CHEST

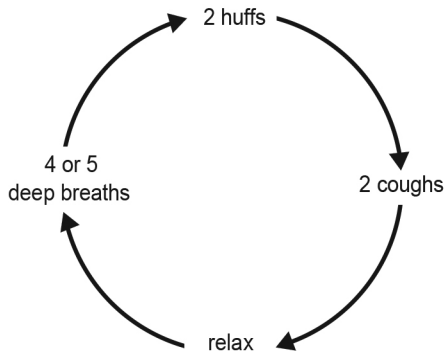
Active Cycle of Breathing Technique (ACBT)

Get into a comfortable position (**high sitting, high side lying**). Relax your upper chest and shoulders so the air can get into your lungs.

Take four or five slow, deep breaths. **Now try 2 huffs.** To huff, take a slow deep breath in, and then push the air out. **Following the 2 huffs**, try 2 strong coughs and relax. After a relaxation period return to the beginning of the cycle (**see below**).

Remember

Do not overdo the coughing as it is very tiring and requires a lot of energy.



Additional Strategies to Help your Chest

- ❖ Protect yourself with an annual flu injection and enquire about a vaccination about pneumonia.
- ❖ Do not smoke.
- ❖ Avoid things such as air pollution, strong fumes, dust, aerosols and cold or humid, dry air.
- ❖ Take medicines correctly and ask if unsure.

- ❖ Do the ACBT 3/4 times per day.
- ❖ Use the relaxation exercises to help relieve muscle tension and anxiety.
- ❖ Eat a well balanced diet with lots of fluids.
- ❖ Try and exercise every day but do not push yourself if you are having a bad day.
- ❖ Recognise the signs of a chest infection and see the doctor promptly.

When to Call the Doctor :

Do not ignore your symptoms, contact your doctor when you notice any of the warning signs. Generally the sooner you start treatment the better.

- ❖ More than usual shortness of breath.
- ❖ More coughing.
- ❖ Increase/decrease in phlegm production.
- ❖ Change in colour of phlegm.
- ❖ Swelling in ankles/legs/around eyes.
- ❖ Sudden weight gain overnight.
- ❖ Heart palpitations or faster pulse.
- ❖ Unusual dizziness/sleepiness/headaches.
- ❖ Visual problems/irritability/trouble thinking.
- ❖ Loss of appetite.
- ❖ Fever.
- ❖ Early morning headaches not relieved by your usual painkillers.

COUGH

Coughing is the body's way of protecting our lungs and getting rid of things that irritate them. This is a normal and important function. However, following some infections we can be left with a dry cough because our lungs have been irritated. It can be difficult to control your cough, however there are a few techniques which may help.

- ❖ Keep yourself well hydrated by drinking small sips of water throughout the day and reducing caffeine and alcohol intake.
- ❖ Avoid things that make you cough, for example:
 - ◆ Smoking and smoky atmospheres.
 - ◆ Use of air fresheners or strong smelling candles.
 - ◆ Strong perfumes or deodorants.
- ❖ Carry out Nose Tummy Breathing if you are moving to an area with a different temperature.
- ❖ Carry out Nose Tummy breathing during gaps between coughs. Breathing through your mouth can be quite irritating for your lungs and may make you cough more. Gently blowing the breath out, as if you were whistling can also help.
- ❖ Keep a glass of water or a sugary drink handy. If you feel yourself starting to cough have a sip. This can soothe your throat. Sucking a sugary sweet may also help.
- ❖ If you have a runny nose, blow your nose if required. Try not to sniff.
- ❖ If you cough when you go to bed consider using some of the positions discussed above to ease your breathing.

If you feel you need further advice regarding your cough please contact your GP.

RELAXATION

In times of stress and distress your muscles become tense, including those that help you breathe. In turn this makes it more difficult for your lungs to take oxygen in.

By using the following technique it will help your muscles relax and allow you to breathe more easily. The relaxation exercises that follow work on the basis that if a muscle works to its maximum, it should relax to its maximum.

First sit or lie down in a comfortable position with your feet slightly apart. Your hands by your side and carry out your diaphragmatic breathing.

Now follow this simple routine : -

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Shoulders | Pull your shoulders down towards your feet. STOP and release the tension. |
| Elbows | Think about your elbows. Push them away from your sides. STOP and release the tension. |
| Hands | Stretch out your fingers. Feel them tense and then STOP. |
| Hips | Let your hips roll outwards. STOP. |
| Knees | Press your knees into the bed / chair. STOP. |
| Ankles | Push your feet away from your face. STOP. |
| Face | Push the frown lines upwards and away. STOP.
Gently part your lips and unclench your teeth.
Feel your jaw relax. |
| Head | Press your head onto the pillow. STOP. |
| Spine | Press your back onto the bed/chair. STOP. |

After your period of relaxation remember to rise slowly. It can take a while to master this technique and at first you should practice daily. However, once you become good at it you can use it to help you cope with the stresses of everyday living.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SLEEPING COMFORTABLY

If you wake up feeling breathless move yourself into a forward sitting position or sit over the edge of the bed, resting your arms on a table if possible.

- ❖ If you keep a fan by your bed turn it on.
- ❖ Try and relax your shoulders.
- ❖ Use your breathing control exercises.
- ❖ You will be less likely to wake up breathless if you lie on your side as you won't slide down the bed.
- ❖ Use a minimum of 2/3 pillows.

ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING & ENERGY CONSERVATION

COPD reduces the amount of energy you have. It's therefore sensible to make the best use of the energy you have. Here are some helpful points that may help.

- ❖ Always use the breathing control while walking.
- ❖ Sit down for as many activities as possible.
- ❖ Take your time!!
- ❖ Take frequent rests.
(**Short rests are more beneficial than long ones**).
- ❖ Alternate a hard task with an easy one.
- ❖ Organise your work space so that you can avoid stretching or bending.
- ❖ Pre-plan your activities - don't do too much in the one day.
- ❖ Carry out any activities at the best time of the day for you ie, generally avoid early morning when you may feel sluggish or lethargic.

Try to become aware of how you breathe and learn how to co-ordinate your breathing with what you are doing, ie, always breathe out with the hardest part of an exercise, when lifting or when you bend down.

Here are some examples :

- ❖ breathe out as you bend down, breathe in as you straighten up.
- ❖ breathe in as you reach into a cupboard, breathe out as you lift something out of it.

PULMONARY REHABILITATION

Pulmonary Rehabilitation is an education, self management programme designed for people with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).



My Lungs My Life

My Lungs My Life is a comprehensive, free to use website for anyone living with COPD. My Lungs My Life will enable you to understand more about your COPD or asthma and help you to use self management effectively as an equal partner with your healthcare professionals. Look out for the self management tips when you see this logo.



It aims to:

- ❖ Improve your level of activity
- ❖ Improve your knowledge and understanding of your condition
- ❖ Improve your ability to control your breathlessness
- ❖ Strengthen muscle groups

Classes are held at various locations within Lanarkshire where a physiotherapist and another multidisciplinary team member will be present at every class to supervise and advise.

You can access this service via your GP, Hospital Consultant, Physiotherapist, Respiratory Nurse Specialist, Practice Nurse or any other appropriate Health care professional involved in your care.

WELFARE RIGHTS AND BENEFITS

North and South Lanarkshire both offer a comprehensive service

Welfare rights staff can offer:

- ❖ General benefits advice
- ❖ Advice and representation at hearings
- ❖ Redundancy advice
- ❖ Help with housing benefit
- ❖ Help with council tax problems

The Welfare rights service is free and confidential.

North lanarkshire

- ❖ Airdrie - 01236 757000
- ❖ Bellshill - 01698 34666
- ❖ Coatbridge - 01236 622100
- ❖ Cumbernauld - 01236 638700
- ❖ Motherwell - 01698 332100
- ❖ Wishaw - 01698 348200

South lanarkshire

The number for all South Lanarkshire Welfare Rights offices is 0303 123 1008.

For further information you can use the following links:

www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk or

www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk

Blue Badge Scheme

Provides national parking concessions. Contact your local Social Work Dept to apply.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

1 **Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland**

Advice line number: 0808 801 0899

Monday to Friday, 9.30am - 4pm

Calls free from landlines and mobiles

Website: www.chss.org.uk

General information including Welfare Grants.

2 **British Lung Foundation**

50 Wellington Street

Glasgow, G2 6HJ Tel: 0141 248 0050 or 03000 030 555

scotland@blf.org.uk

Run local support groups for people with COPD.

“Breathe Easy Groups”

3 **Occupation Environment Disease Association**

38 Drapers Road, Endfield, Middlesex ENZ 8LU

Tel: 0170 787 3025

Deal with compensation and claims for those with occupational lung disease.

3 **Age Scotland**

Causewayhead House, 160 Causewayside, Edinburgh EH9 1PR

Tel: 0845 833 0200

Silverline Scotland helpline

Tel: 0800 470 8090

for information and advice all day every day.

BREATHE EASY CLUB NEWSLETTER

The Breathe Easy Club is the only support and information network throughout the UK for people with any type of lung or breathing condition. The Club is completely free to join and has more than 17,000 supporters from all backgrounds and forms of breathing problems. You can be involved as much or as little as you wish.

Joining Breathe Easy can help you understand and manage your breathing condition a little better.

Breathe Easy Clyde Valley Support Group

1st Thursday of every month (except January) 1pm,
The Jim Foley Centre, John Street, Wishaw ML2 7TB

Singing Group

This group is led by a local singing leader who has taken part in the BLF Singing programme. This means they've been trained to lead singing groups for people with lung conditions.

Wednesday 1.30 - 2.30pm

Kilbryde Hospice, McGuinness Way,
East Kilbride G75 8GJ

Email: Anna Ludwig info@harperhall-music-therapy.co.uk



BRITISH LUNG
FOUNDATION



Tea/coffee
available

Contact number for further information

Breathe Easy Helpline: 03000 030 555

CONFIDENTIALITY AND THE USE OF PATIENT INFORMATION

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www.careopinion.org.uk

NHS Lanarkshire - for local services and the latest health news visit www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk
NHS Lanarkshire General
Enquiry Line: 0300 30 30 243

NHS inform - The national health information service for Scotland.
www.nhsinform.co.uk
Tel No: 0800 22 44 88

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Pub. date:	Dec 2020
Review date:	Dec 2022
Issue No:	08a
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