

PHYSIOTHERAPY GUIDE BOOK
ADVICE FOR CARERS AND FAMILIES

Chest Physiotherapy



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This leaflet will provide you with basic advice to help you with your breathlessness. Chest physiotherapy will help you to clear secretions from your airways.

This booklet is intended to act as a reminder following a physiotherapy session – please contact your physiotherapist if you have any questions.

Coping with breathlessness

- It is very important to slow down when you are feeling breathless.
- Use a talking test. If you are moving at the right pace, you should be able to talk. If you can't talk because you are breathless you need to slow down the activity or take a break.
- It is helpful to control your breathing by **breathing in from your nose and out from your mouth slowly**. Keep this in mind when you are doing repeated exercises such as climbing the stairs or walking. Try to pace the exercise with your breathing.

Recovering from breathlessness

- Stop any activity and find a comfortable forward leaning position to rest.
- The breath out should be longer than the breath in
- Use a fan in front of you and focus on breathing control. This will help with recovery.

Positions to ease breathlessness

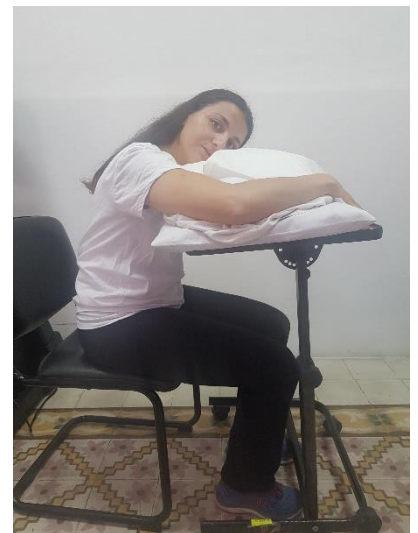
High side lying: make sure your head and chest are supported by pillows.
Bend your legs up



Forward lean sitting: pile several pillows on a table.
Relax your head on them and relax your arms on the table.

Or

Relaxed sitting position: sit on a chair, rest elbows on thighs and relax your hands and wrists.



Forward lean standing: lean against a banister, chair or sturdy surface but keep a comfortable distance. Relax your hands, wrists and neck.



Breathing exercises

Pursed-lip breathing is used for any activities that make you feel breathless.

1. Breathe in slowly from your nose (2 counts) keeping your mouth closed
2. Pucker or purse your lips as if you are going to whistle.
3. Breathe out slowly and gently through your pursed lips (4 counts)



- You can place your hands on your stomach. When you breathe in, you should feel your hands rise.

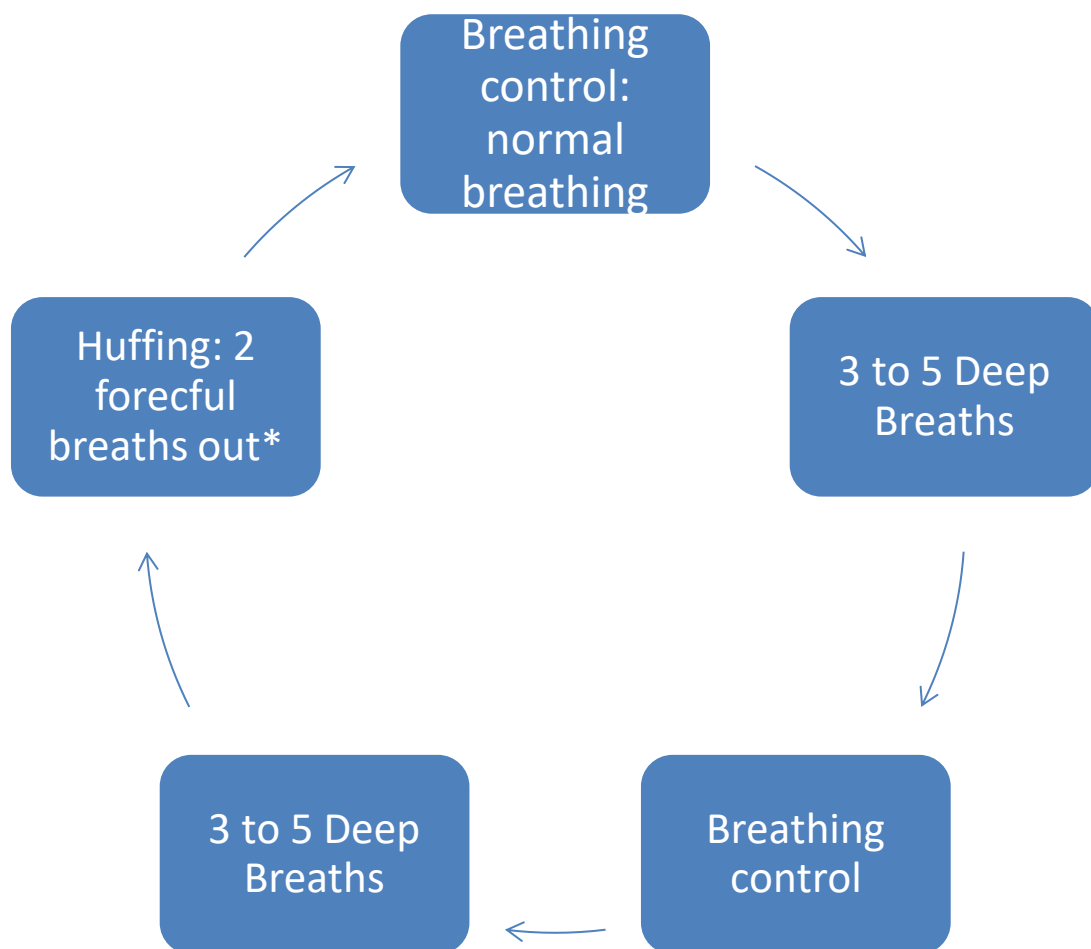


Chest clearance techniques

Chest physiotherapy is used to help clear secretions/mucus from the lungs. The amount and type of treatment depends on the individual. Your physiotherapist will guide you better.

Active Cycle of Breathing Techniques

Start of sitting down in a comfortable position.



*Huffing is like trying to steam up a mirror with your breath.

Percussions

This is used to help loosen secretions. Your physiotherapist will demonstrate this during the session.

A cupped hand is used to tap the chest firmly and rhythmically over the back as shown in the first photo. This can be used with shaking and vibrations.



Exercises

Neck exercises

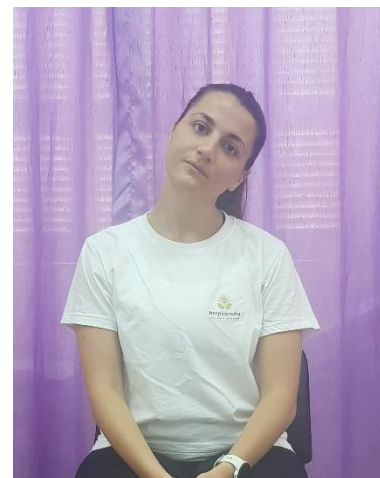
- look down and hold for 3 to 5 seconds
- look back up slowly
- look up and hold for 3 to 5 second



- look to the side
- hold for 3 to 5 seconds
- repeat on both sides



- Drop your head to the side, as though to touch your shoulder
- Hold for 3 to 5 seconds
- You should feel a stretch on the opposite side
- Repeat on both sides



Shoulder shrugs

- Lift both your shoulders
- As though to touch your ears
- Repeat 10 times



Shoulder circles

- Sit with feet slightly apart
- Place your hands on your shoulders if you can
- Circle shoulders forward
- Circles shoulders backwards



Shoulder blades

- Squeeze your shoulder blades together
- Imagine you are holding a pencil between your shoulder blades
- Take the elbows back
- Relax slowly to the starting position



Arm rising

- Lift your arms up slowly above your head
- Hold and slowly lower your arms down

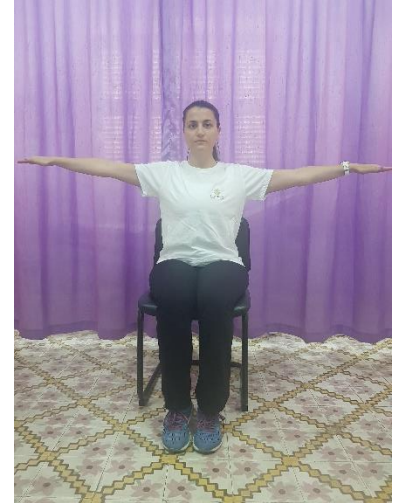


- You can keep your hands together if one arm is weaker than the other one.



Shoulder Abduction

- Start with your arms by your side
- Lift your arms up slowly by your side
- Hold and lower arms down

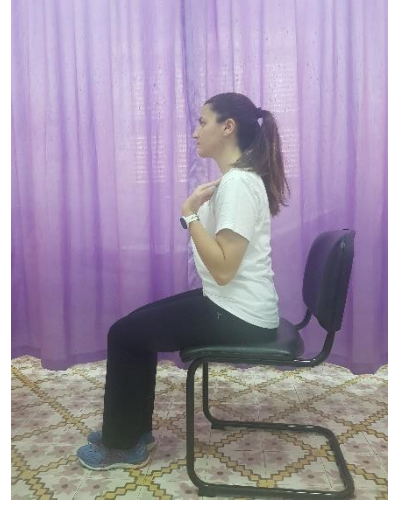


- Bend your elbows and keep your hands together
- Open your arms by your side
- Hold and bring your hands back together slowly



Elbow movement

- Bend your elbows and touch your shoulders
- Straighten the elbow, lowering down the hands



Finger movements

- Make a fist
- Open your fingers
- Repeat for 10 times



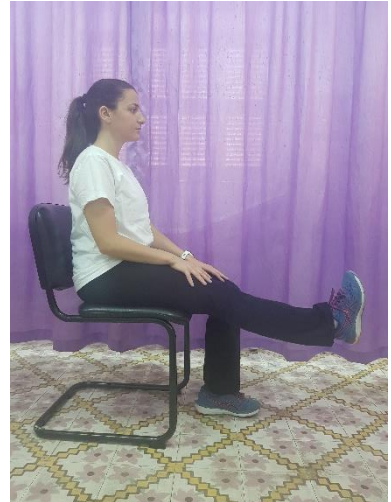
Marching in sitting

- Sit feet slightly apart
- Lift your foot off the floor
- Keep your back straight



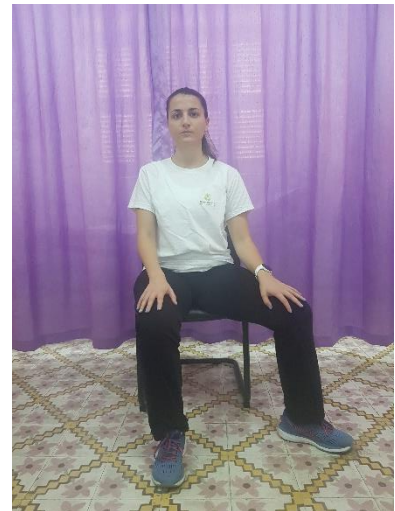
Knee extensions

- Straighten one knee at a time
- Return foot to starting position



Hip abduction

- Lift your leg slightly off the floor
- Take your leg to the side
- Return to starting position
- Repeat on both sides



Ankle pumps

- Pull your toes towards you
- point your toes away from you, imaging pushing a pedal
- Repeat 10 times on both sides



Sit to stand

- Sit with chair against a wall
- Lean forward
- Stand up and hold your position
- Sit back down slowly
- Use your hands on the chair if necessary



Trunk rotations

- Twist to the side and touch your hip
- Repeat on both sides



Side flexion

- Reach your arm overhead
- Bend to your side
- Repeat on both sides



Marching in standing

- Hold on to a steady surface or chair
- Lift your leg off the floor
- Don't bend from your back
- Repeat on both sides



Indoor walking

- Practice walking inside in the corridor
- Keep a chair available for when you need to rest
- Follow your physiotherapist's instructions

Notes:

- These exercises focus on upper and lower body strength. They are recommended to prevent stiffness.
- Try to repeat each exercise in this way: **5-rest-5-rest-5 or 10-rest-10-rest-10**
- If you feel tired rest before continuing the exercises
- Try to do them once or twice daily
- If you feel any pain stop the exercise and ask for advice

You should not be breathless when carrying out these exercises. If you feel breathless, stop and focus on controlling your breathing (as explained on page 3)



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