

The Active Cycle of Breathing Technique (ACBT)

Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy

Introduction

What is the Active Cycle of Breathing Technique (ACBT)?

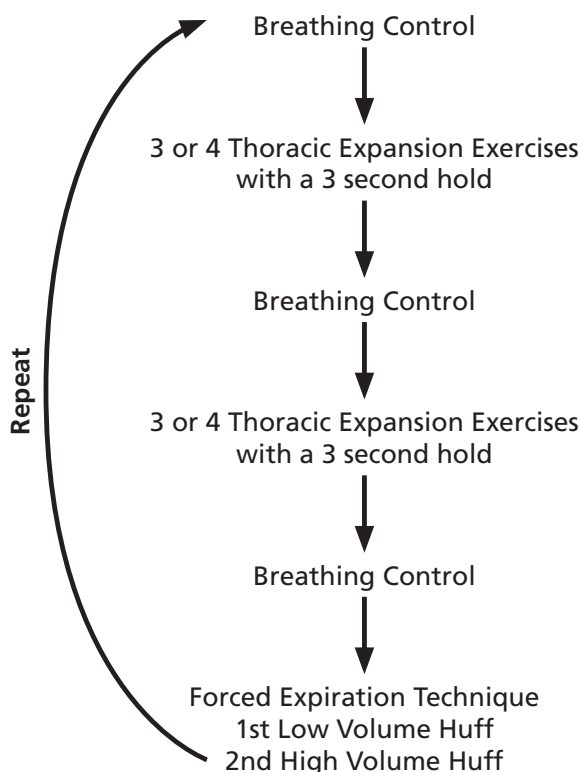
This is a technique you may be taught to assist you in clearing your chest of sputum (phlegm).

A member of the physiotherapy team usually teaches ACBT.

ACBT can prove beneficial to patients with long term chest conditions for example Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), or Bronchiectasis, where sputum production is a symptom of the disease.

How do I perform the Technique?

The Method



The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

The cycle should be halted when two cycles have been completed and no sputum cleared, or if you begin to feel tired or extremely breathless.

If breathlessness becomes a problem you should sit quietly until your breathing becomes controlled again.

What do these terms mean?

Breathing Control

This is when you should take gentle breaths in and out. This allows you to regain your normal pattern of breathing in between the deeper breaths.

Thoracic Expansion Exercises

These are used to expand the lungs, and assist in moving sputum. When taking a deep breath in, air is able to reach all areas of the lung. Especially those areas where sputum may collect.

Sitting quietly, take a long, slow breath in through your nose.

End – Inspiratory Hold

After the deep breath, hold your breath for 3 seconds before breathing out. This way air can be encouraged into poorly expanded areas of the lung.

Repeat these 3-4 times.

Forced Expiratory Technique

This is also known as a “huff”. The technique is used to help clear sputum from different areas of the lungs.

Low Lung Volume Huff;

- Moves the sputum from the bottom of the lungs
- Take a gentle breath in
- Now take a long, slow breath out through an open mouth. As if you might be steaming up a mirror.

High Lung Volume Huff;

- Helps to clear secretions from the top of the lungs
- This time take a larger breath in and a short sharp breath out through an open mouth. Like you do with a peak flow metre.

Always begin with 2 low lung volume huffs and follow on with the high lung volume huff.

This is the most effective way to clear your sputum.

Special Points

Your Physiotherapist may alter this technique slightly, to make sure it is ideal for you.

The breathing exercises to clear your sputum should be practised about 20 minutes after taking your bronchodilator (reliever inhaler).

If you have a steroid inhaler try to perform the exercises to clear your sputum before you take it.

Your Physiotherapist will advise you on what position you should be in when doing your ACBT.

It is normal to do ACBT at least twice a day for approximately 10 minutes. Your Physiotherapist will guide you depending on your individual needs.

Pace yourself – do not make yourself more breathless or distressed trying to clear sputum.

Take your time and have plenty of rests.

Avoid coughing fits – have a drink of water handy to prevent this.

Useful Contacts:

Physiotherapy Department New Cross Hospital Wolverhampton
01902 695597

Asthma + lung uk
www.asthmaandlung.org.uk
0300 222 5800

NHS smoking helpline
0300 123 1044

Useful Website:

www.nhs.uk/conditions
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Author – Respiratory Physiotherapy Team, New Cross Hospital.

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。