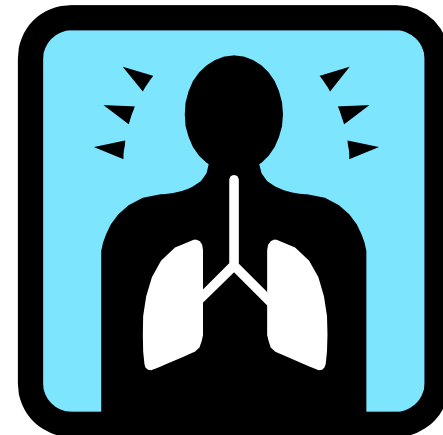


## Help Yourself Breathe

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### Tender Loving Care for Your Lungs

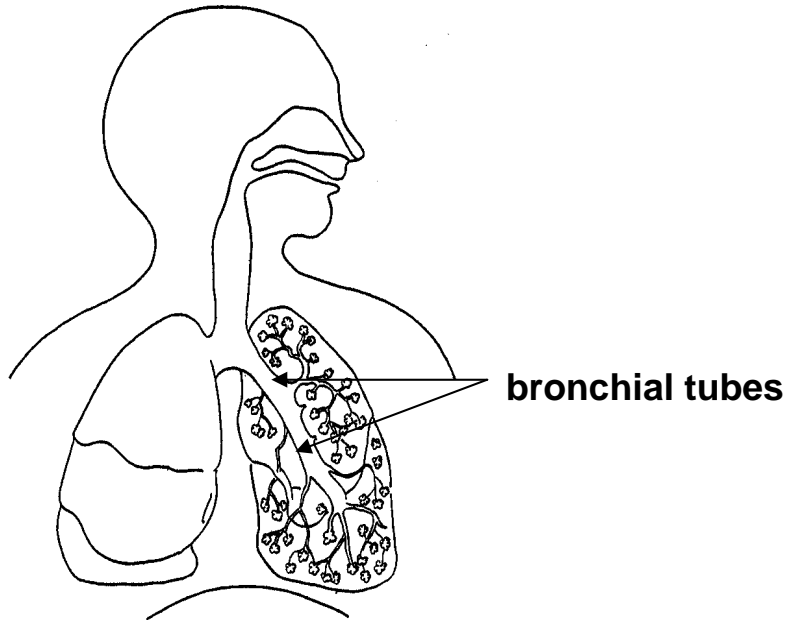


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Department of Physiotherapy

## Why are you breathless?

Chronic Airflow Limitation or Obstruction is a decrease in the movement of air in and out of the bronchial tubes.



This can cause problems if:

- secretions are blocking the airways
- the airways are irritated and inflamed blocking the movement of air going in and out

## Contacts:

Name	Call

## Notes:

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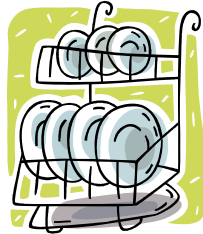
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## More Energy Saving Tips

- Break a task into steps.  
For example, dry  $\frac{1}{2}$  the dishes at one time.  
Ask yourself, "Do I need to do this job?" Dishes can air dry.



- Pace yourself.  
Avoid running around.  
Try not to put pressure on yourself to get things done.



- Sit when you can.  
Avoid holding your arms above your head.



## Breathing exercises help:

- clear secretions
- control your breathing
- build up your strength

## Before you begin these exercises, remember:

- Breathing and coughing exercises are best done in the morning before breakfast.
- If you use a puffer (inhaler), do your exercises 20 minutes after you use the puffer.
- Do your exercises even when you are not feeling well. It is important to keep your lungs clear.
- If your secretions increase or change colour, do more breathing exercises during the day.





## To clear secretions, do deep breathing:

- Do deep breathing exercises 4 to 5 times a day, sitting or standing.
- Relax your shoulders.
- Take a deep breath in through your nose.
- Breathe out slowly through your mouth.
- Breathe out longer than you breathe in.
- Count to 1 when you breathe in.
- Count to 3 when you breathe out.
- Repeat 5 deep breaths and rest.
- Try 5 more deep breaths in and out and rest.
- Try blowing the air out through **pursed-lips**. Shape your lips like you are going to whistle, then blow out slowly. This will help you breathe easier.



## Energy Saving Tips

- Think of yourself as a person who conserves energy. By planning how you use your energy, you will have more energy left to do what you really want to do. 
- Plan your daily chores in advance. Planning helps you stay relaxed. It also helps you avoid pushing yourself beyond your limits. 
- Do the tasks that need the most energy when you have the most energy. For example, if you have more energy in the morning, plan to do your chores and perhaps a few exercises then.

## Guidelines to follow when you exercise at home:

- Increase your walking distance by 1 minute every 3 to 4 days until you are walking 30 minutes easily.
- Keep doing your hospital exercises 3 times a day.
- Increase the number slowly until you are able to do 20 of each exercise at each session.
- Follow your breathing exercises and control techniques.



- If you use a bike in your home program, slowly increase the time by 1 minute every 3 to 4 days until you reach 15 minutes. When you have reached 15 minutes, increase resistance the way your physiotherapist showed you.



## Controlled Coughing

Coughing helps remove secretions. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease may increase the amount of mucous you produce. Mucous can irritate your airways and cause frequent, uncomfortable coughing spells.

Controlled coughing should be done after each set of breathing exercises:

- Take a deep breath in.
- Cough deeply 2 times with your mouth slightly open.
- Follow each set of breathing exercises with 2 controlled coughs.

## Huffing

If it is hard for you to cough, try huffing:

- Take a medium breath in.
- Make a sound like **ha** to push the air out very fast with your mouth slightly open.
- Do this 3 to 4 times – then cough.

Huffing helps move the secretions from the small to the large airways in your lungs.

## To Control Your Breathing

When you start to feel short of breath or your chest gets tight, do pursed lip breathing.

If you are still short of breath, slow down the pace of your activity until you are breathing comfortably. Then, do the activity at a slower rate.

## Positions for Resting and Relaxing

### Relaxed standing

- Lean against a wall.
- Relax your shoulders.
- Let your arms hang loose at your sides.



### Resting while sitting

- Put 1 to 3 pillows on a table.
- Relax with your upper chest and head resting against them.



**Practice pursed-lip breathing in the standing and sitting positions.**

## Building Up Your Strength

Exercise helps build up muscles all over your body. People who have a chest condition which makes them feel short of breath try to avoid feeling breathless as much as they can. They become less active and avoid many of their normal activities, such as walking and climbing stairs.

When you are less active, you are less fit. This means that even small activities cause more effort and make you feel more short of breath.

Exercise can break this downward spiral of becoming more short of breath and weaker.

Regular exercise helps increase your fitness level. As you become fitter, you will be less short of breath. You will learn and practice some exercises in the hospital. At home, you should begin an exercise program to keep you fit.

### Contact your doctor if:

- Your sputum changes colour.
- Your sputum increases or decreases.
- Your ankles or feet swell.
- You feel more short of breath than usual for a few days.

