

Patient information factsheet

Manual assisted cough

This factsheet explains what a manual assisted cough is and how it is performed.

What is a manual assisted cough?

A manual assisted cough is a technique used to enhance your own cough strength to help with clearance of secretions (phlegm). It can be carried out in a lying, side-lying or sitting position.

Why is it used?

Your condition has led to weakness in the muscles which usually help people to cough. This means you may sometimes have difficulty clearing secretions from your chest. It's important to clear secretions in order to maintain clear and healthy lungs. By using this technique, you can decrease the risk of repeated chest infections and complications, which can improve your quality of life.

How is a manual assisted cough carried out?

Your therapist will find a position that is comfortable for you. They will place their hands and/or forearms below your rib cage and instruct you to have a cough. As you cough, your therapist will perform a forceful, inwards-and-upwards movement which will enhance the strength of your own cough. This movement should not be painful. Please let your therapist know if you experience any pain.

Further information

If you have not opened your bowels for more than 24 hours, contact your therapist for advice.

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