

Patient information factsheet

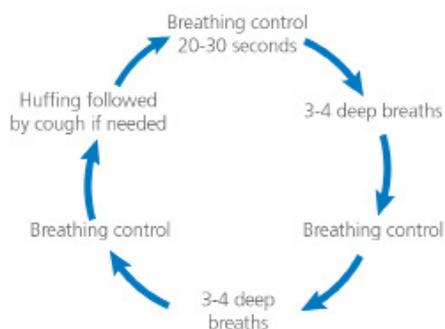
The active cycle of breathing

The Active Cycle of Breathing (ACBT) is a breathing technique used to clear secretions. This factsheet explains the three different parts of ACBT, which are:

- breathing control
- deep breaths
- huff or cough

Firstly, find a comfortable, well-supported position. Some people find that leaning forward in a chair or sitting upright in a chair is helpful. Relax your neck, upper chest, shoulders and arms.

The active cycle of breathing



Breathing control – relaxed breathing

- Rest your hand lightly on your stomach.
- Breathe in and out quietly and gently through your nose if you can.
- As you breathe in your stomach should rise.
- You should do breathing control for as long as you need to. If you are quite breathless you may need to do breathing control for longer until your breathing settles again.

Deep breaths

- Deep breaths help to get the air behind the sputum that is stuck in your airways.
- Take a long, slow, deep breath in through your nose if you can.
- Breathe out gently through your mouth.
- Try to breathe right down to the bottom of your lungs, expanding your ribcage.
- Aim to do three to five deep breaths before returning to breathing control.
- You may need to do a few cycles of deep breathing and breathing control before doing a huff if your sputum is sticky.

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Huff

- A huff is similar to a cough but you aim to keep your mouth and throat open.
- Imagine you are trying to steam a mirror right in front of you.
- Take a breath in and then exhale the air out forcefully through an open mouth.
- If you wheeze as you exhale, you are huffing too hard.

Cough

- After doing a huff you may need to do a good strong cough and bring your secretions out into a pot or tissue.

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