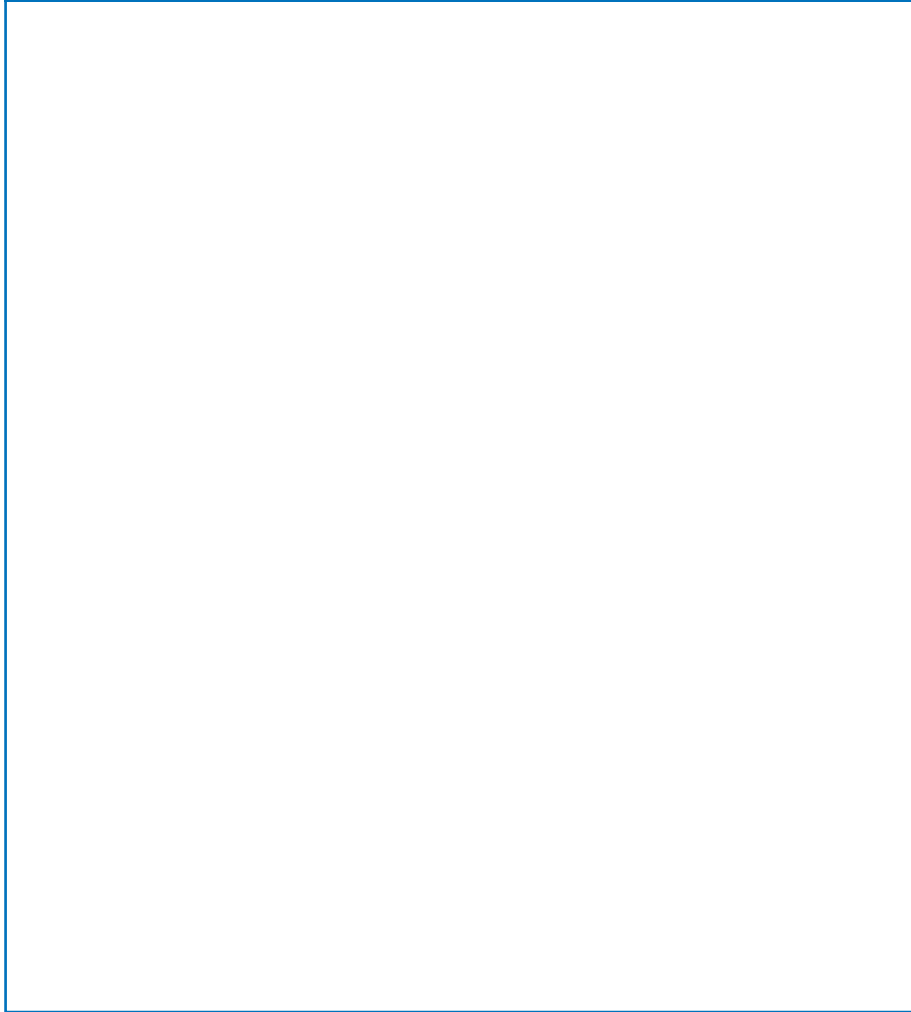


Additional information




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Guide to cough management

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Why is mouth breathing a problem?

- Dry, fast flowing air enters the lungs quickly which can provoke a cough and lead into the cycle of coughing - see the diagram on page 3.
- Mouth breathing during heavy exercise however is normal.

What is a 'normal' breathing pattern?

- Nose breathing
- Gentle, silent diaphragmatic (tummy) breathing with very little upper chest movement
- Breathing out is quiet and with no effort
- The rate is rhythmical with an average 10-15 breaths per minute at rest
- Depth of breathing should vary appropriately during activity and rest

Learning this breathing pattern is essential in helping you manage your cough.

Spend time practising a good breathing pattern when you are resting and during light activity.

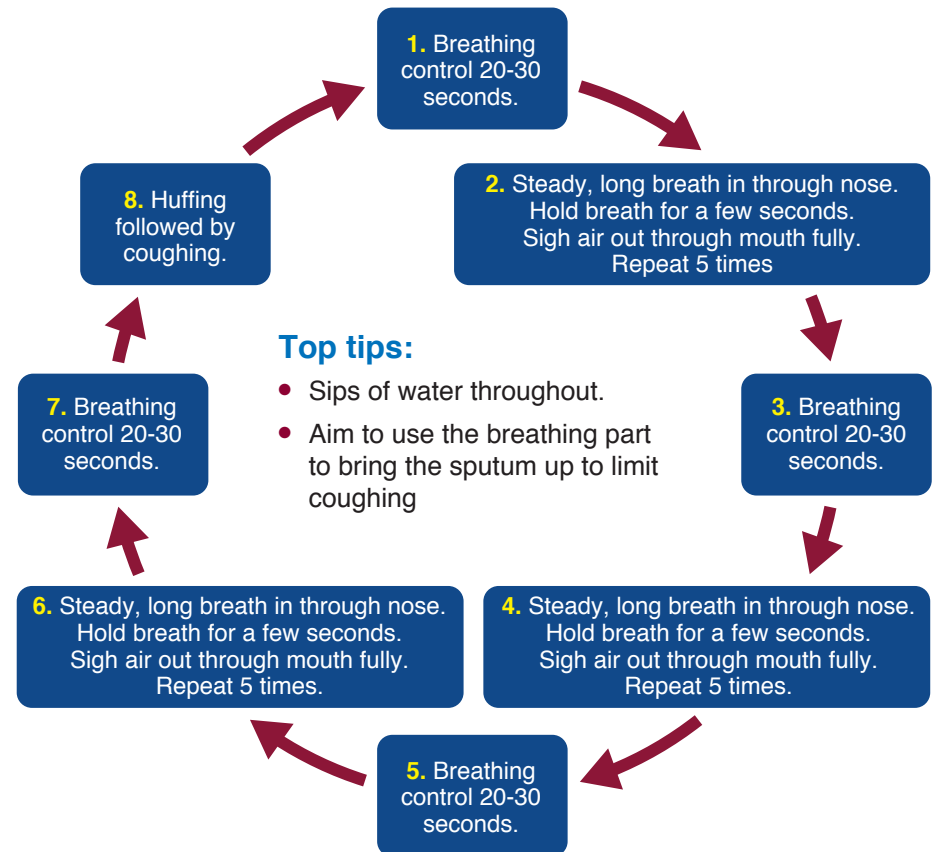
Ask your respiratory physiotherapist for help if you are struggling.

How will this help me manage my cough

This will help you to break the cycle detailed on page 3.

How can I manage my cough?

Ask yourself if your cough sounds productive (there is phlegm), or if your cough is dry. If your cough is productive, try the following breathing exercises to clear the phlegm.



If your cough is dry sounding use the following strategies as often as needed. You will need to keep practising these as they may not work immediately.

- close your mouth and swallow
- drop or relax your shoulders and gently breathe in and out through your nose until the urge to cough goes away.

- try sipping drinks regularly during the day. Try hot and cold drinks initially to see which works better for you.
- try sucking lozenges or boiled sweets
- try just clearing your throat gently to relieve the tickle

Using a combination of these techniques consistently is effective at reducing cough.

Try the above ideas as soon as you feel the tickle or urge to cough coming on, not when you are already having a coughing bout.

Cough management can be very hard - but keep practising and it will become easier.

Summary:

Be kind to your airways

- practice the techniques detailed in this leaflet regularly
- managing your cough can be very difficult but will improve with practice
- ask your respiratory physiotherapist for help if required.

Breathe through your nose

- at rest and during light activity
- follow the 'good' breathing pattern advice detailed in this leaflet.

Keep practising

- these techniques often take a while for you to notice any benefits

Why can a cough be difficult to manage?

- If constant coughing has caused inflammation in the upper airways.
- If you have a chest infection.
- If you have a lot of phlegm you will need to use chest clearance exercises.
- If your airways are tight and wheezy.
- If you mainly breathe through your mouth with an abnormal breathing pattern.

Chronic cough cycle

