

Positive Expiratory Pressure for Children and Young People

Information for patients, parents and carers

Why do we need airway clearance?

We all have mucus in our lungs to help keep them moist and free of dirt and bacteria. Normally this mucus is free to move and we are only aware of it when we are unwell. In certain conditions the body can produce more mucus than is needed or in conditions such as Cystic Fibrosis, it can be thicker and stickier and therefore doesn't move as easily.

The aim of airway clearance is to get sufficient air moving through the lungs in order to stop this mucus getting stuck and clogging up the airways. In other conditions, the airways are floppier and need some extra pressure to hold the airways open. The PEP mask helps provide this.

Positive Expiratory Pressure (PEP) Mask

One of the best ways to get air moving around the lungs is by using positive expiratory pressure or PEP therapy. It creates a small positive pressure in the airways by making your lungs work a little bit harder when they breathe out. This helps hold open the airways, open airways that have closed over, and encourages mucus to move.



Pari PEP and mask



RMT PEP Mask

Size of resistor = _____

How to use the PEP Mask:

- If you are using your PEP with a mask, hold it firmly over your nose and mouth, ensuring a good seal
- If you are using your PEP with a mouthpiece, ensure your lips are sealed around it
- You should aim for 15 breaths and make sure you take a long breath out each time
- Following this you should carry out 5 huffs and a cough
- Repeat this for 3-4 cycles, 2-3 times daily.

Cleaning the PEP mask

After every use, take the PEP mask and resistor apart and wash in hot, soapy water. Rinse and then leave out to drip dry on some paper towel.

Once a week sterilise all parts by boiling it up for 10 minutes.

Helpful hints for parents and carers

Try to make physiotherapy sessions a positive experience- playing music that they enjoy or letting them watch a favourite TV programme while they do it can help them have a more positive view of their therapy as they get older. Singing songs and chatting to them throughout also help the child and others to view it as a positive time.

Getting family members involved helps your child to see their therapy as a normal part of their everyday life. Your physiotherapist can help with this teaching.

Contact telephone numbers

This leaflet is a guide to PEP therapy, which should be taught to you personally by a skilled Physiotherapist. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the Physiotherapy Department on **0131 312 1079**

Royal Hospital for Children and Young People

50 Little France Crescent

Edinburgh

EH16 4TJ

Tel. 0131 312 1079

