

## Contact Information

### Telephone Numbers:

**Physiotherapist - 07973659700**

**Physiotherapy Assistant - 07971122675**

*Please call us, if you have any worries or questions, about the activities in this booklet or your symptoms.*

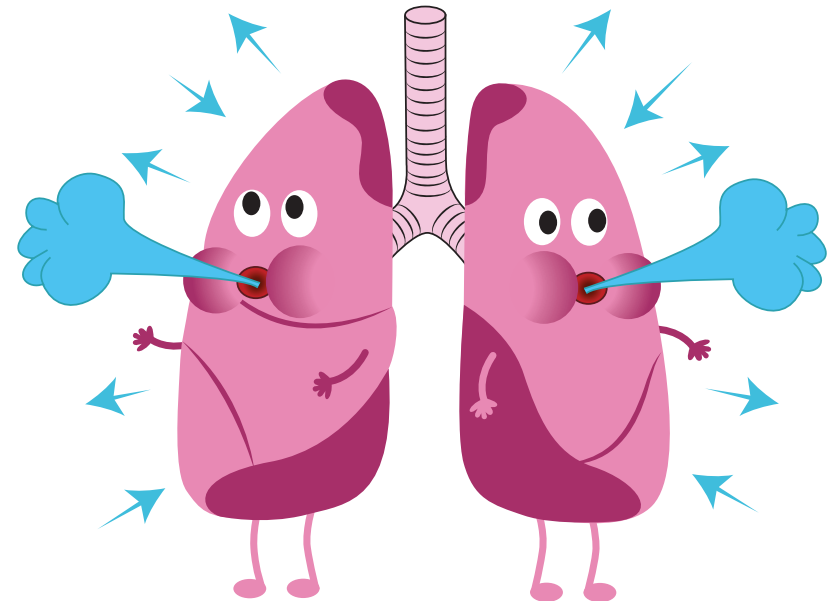
### Address:

**West Lothian Integrated Respiratory Team,  
REACT Hub, Ground Floor,  
St John's Hospital,  
West Lothian, EH54 6PP.**

## Integrated Respiratory Team

### Active Cycle of Breathing Leaflet

A breathing technique to help clear your chest



*This leaflet was compiled by WLIRT*

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*Medical Photography, NHS Lothian, 23\_02597\_MD.*

## Breathing Technique

This leaflet explains how you can clear secretions from your chest more effectively and easily.

It will remind you what you were taught by your Physiotherapist

### What this breathing technique does:

The active cycle of breathing technique (ACBT) is a breathing technique that helps to:

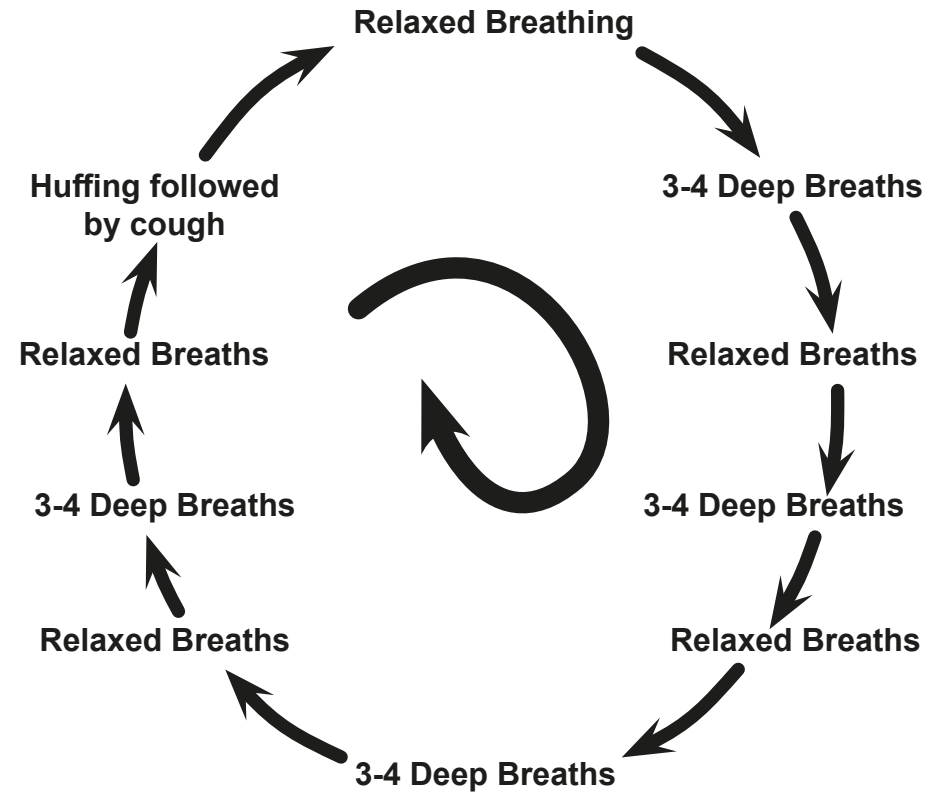
- Improve air entry to your lungs
- Loosen and clear secretions

**Position:**

You are able to practice this breathing technique in various positions. It can work well in sitting, leaning forward, or lying down.

## Active Cycle of Breathing

### Illustration of Cycle



## Clearing secretions

### Step 4. Coughing:

This is the last stage of this technique.

This should follow 2 - 3 huffs .

**DO NOT** cough unless you feel secretions are ready to be cleared.

You can swallow repeatedly, to help prevent an unwanted cough



## Settle your breath

### Step 1. Relaxed Breathing:

- Begin with some relaxed and gentle breathing.
- Make sure you are comfortable and well supported.
- Breathe in slowly through your nose and out through your nose (or mouth).
- To help with this, you can place one hand on your upper chest and the other on your belly area. Try to feel your stomach gently rising under your lower hand as you breathe in and falling under your hand as you breath out.
- Try to let go of any tension in your shoulders and stomach areas as you breathe.
- Breathe at a rate that feels comfortable, it will slow down as control is regained.
- Do not force your breath
- With practice, your control of breathing will become easier.

You can use this method when you feel breathless, to help regain control and allow it to settle more quickly.

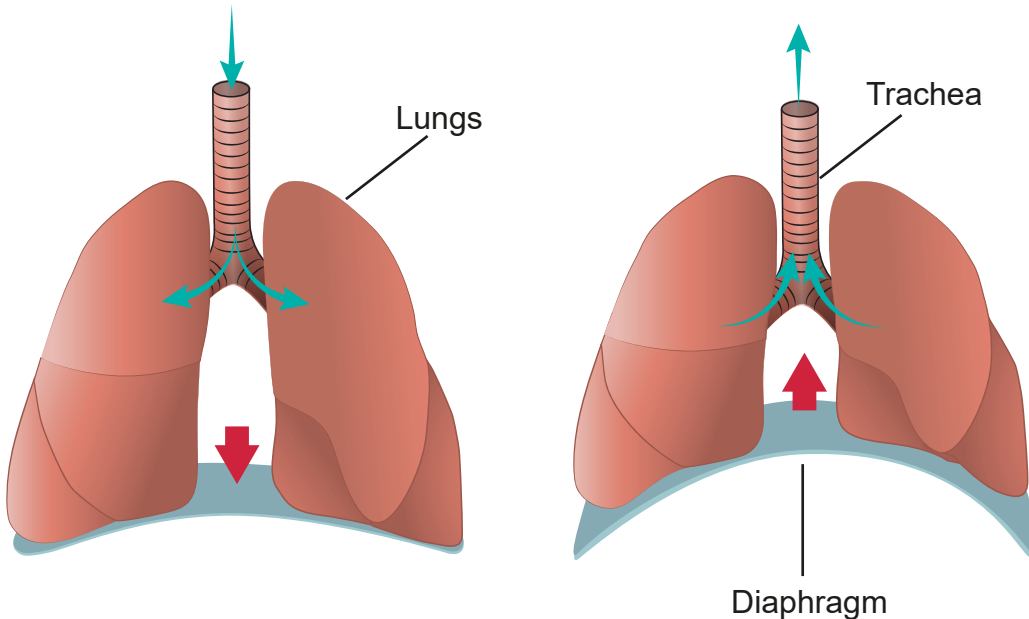
## Loosening the secretions

### Step 2. Deep breathing:

Now take **3-4 slow breaths**, deeper than usual, with a relaxed breath out. Take a rest if you feel lightheaded.

Try to **hold your breath** in for 2-3 seconds with each deep breath. (Don't worry if you cannot manage this)

Continue to alternate between the relaxed normal sized breaths in **step 1** and the 3-4 slightly deeper breaths in **step 2** for up to 4 'cycles'. You can vary this to suit yourself.



## Moving the secretions

### Step 3. Huffing:

This is a medium sized breath in, followed by a fast breath out through **an open mouth**, using the muscles of your chest and stomach to force the breath out.

You may have been given a cardboard tube mouthpiece by your physiotherapist, if you have, use this to help when 'huffing.'

Huffing will move secretions along the airways to a point where you can cough them up. The huff should never be violent or cause wheeze.

Aim to do this 2-3 times

