

## ACBT

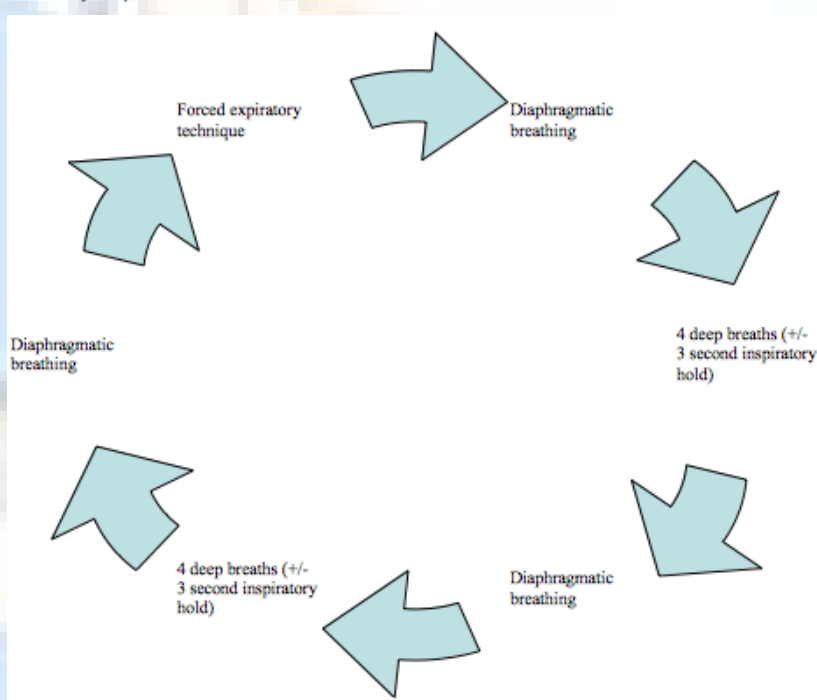
The active cycle of breathing technique is a breathing technique used to clear secretions.

It is made up of 3 parts:

1. Breathing control (relaxed breathing)
2. Deep breathing exercises
3. Huffing

### Breathing Control

Your airways are very sensitive and can feel tight and wheezy especially after coughing or when you are breathless. Breathing control is used to relax the airways and relieve these symptoms.



- Rest one hand on your stomach and allow your shoulders to drop down.
- Breathe quietly and gently. As you breathe in your stomach should rise slightly, it should fall as you breathe out – do not force the air out.

The length of time you spend doing breathing control will vary depending on how breathless you feel. 3 or 4 breaths may be enough when you're well but more will be needed if you are breathless because you have an infection.

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For more information on airway clearance:  
[http://www.cysticfibrosis.org.uk/media/151218/FS%20%20-Physiotherapy\\_airway%20clearance\\_v4\\_Apr\\_2013.pdf](http://www.cysticfibrosis.org.uk/media/151218/FS%20%20-Physiotherapy_airway%20clearance_v4_Apr_2013.pdf)

## Deep breathing exercises

Deep breathing is used to get air behind the sputum stuck in small airways

- Relax your upper chest
- Breathe in slowly and deeply
- Breathe out gently until your lungs are empty – don't force the air out
- Repeat 3 – 4 times, if you feel light headed go back to relaxed breathing

Once you've completed your deep breathing exercises, go back to breathing control to make sure that your airways are relaxed. If you are unwell or your sputum is difficult to clear you may need to go back to the deep breathing exercises a second time before huffing. Try it out and see what works for you.

## Huffing

Huffing moves sputum from the small airways to the larger airways, from where they are removed by coughing. Coughing alone does not remove sputum from small airways.

- Take a normal sized breath in
- Squeeze the breath out by contracting your tummy muscles and keep your mouth and throat open. The breath should be prolonged, but don't continue until the lungs are empty
- Your physiotherapist may alter your technique with these huffs to a longer or shorter breath in or out.

## Things to remember

- If prescribed, take DNase at least 1 hour before physio.
- Make sure you have taken any 'blue' inhalers, known as bronchodilators around 10minutes prior to physio.
- If prescribed, take nebulised antibiotics eg colomycin after your physio session.

## Your physiotherapy routine

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