

How To Cope With Breathlessness

Easy Breathing

This method helps to reduce your shortness of breath by allowing you to control your own breathing:

1. Sit upright with your head and neck supported on pillows and hands resting in your lap
2. Put one hand on your stomach.
3. Breathe slowly and gently, trying not to use your shoulders or upper chest. The hand on your stomach should move up and down.

Positions of Relaxation

The following positions will help to control and relax your breathing when you are short of breath. You can use the easy breathing described above in any of these positions:

High side lying

- Use about 5 pillows to raise your upper chest.
- This is a good position if you become breathless at night.



Forward lean position

- Sit at a table, with your head and upper chest supported on several pillows.



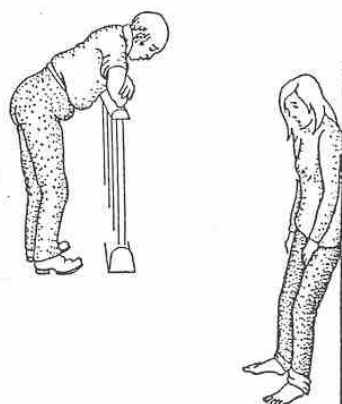
Relaxed sitting

- Keep your back straight.
- Rest your forearms on your thighs.



Forward lean standing

- Lean forward with forearms resting on an object of suitable height e.g. a windowsill

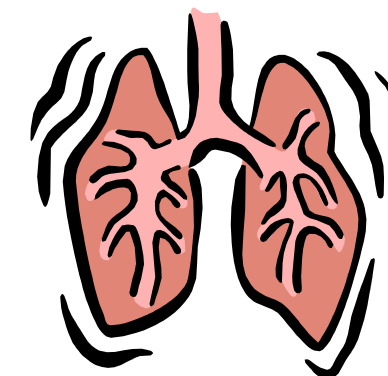


Relaxed standing

- Lean back against a wall with your feet slightly apart and away from the wall.
- Relax your shoulders and arms

The easy breathing described above can be carried out in the above 2 positions if you are unable to sit down.

This Pathway outlines a calendar of events detailing the care and treatment you may expect before, during and after your hospitalisation for pneumonia. You will be given this pathway along with more detailed education if required. You will be asked to sign that you have received and understood the information. You will also have the opportunity to ask questions about your care and be involved in planning if you have individual requirements.



PLEASE TAKE SOME TIME TO GO THROUGH THIS PATHWAY AND ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT ANYTHING YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

What is Pneumonia?

Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs. It often follows a bad cold or flu-like illness, which lowers the normal defence mechanisms.

The most common symptoms are:

- fever
- feeling short of breath
- a cough
- low energy levels
- ❖ Recovery from pneumonia depends not only on the type of pneumonia, but also on the general health of the person before becoming ill.
- ❖ The elderly and those who are already seriously ill are at risk of a slower recovery.
- ❖ When recovering from pneumonia, it is important to consult with your doctor if:
 - you are not improving in the first few days or
 - your symptoms worsen
- ❖ It is also important to keep your follow-up appointment with your doctor.

VACCINATION:

- ❖ You should discuss immunisation against influenza and pneumococcal pneumonia with your doctor.
- ❖ All people over the age of 65 should receive the vaccine, as should anyone with a serious illness, such as diabetes or heart disease.

Disclaimer: This Patient Pathway is intended as a guide only. Each patient is an individual and responses may vary. If you have any questions, please talk with your doctor or nurse.