



Huff Cough

Coughing is your body's own way to remove mucus from the lungs. However, coughing is not always enough to clear the mucus. Reflex coughing can leave you worn-out. Hard coughing can also lead to airway collapse making it harder to clear mucus. The Huff Cough is a gentle way of coughing, which speeds airflow while you keep the throat open. To save energy and oxygen, you must practice and master the method of controlled "Huff Cough".

You should work with a respiratory therapist or other health care provider when starting this therapy. The instructions below will help you do the therapy at home.

To Do Huff Cough:

- Begin in a sitting position with your chin slightly upward
- Use your diaphragm (stomach muscle) to breathe in slowly
- Hold the breath for 2 to 3 seconds
- Force the breath out your mouth in one quick burst of air
- Make sure the back of your throat is kept open

Adjusting the therapy:

- The length and force of the breath will change where mucus is cleared
- A normal size breath out clears the larger breathing tubes
- A longer breath out clears the smaller breathing tubes
- You should do both to get the best therapy

How Long:

- You should never Huff Cough to the point of exhaustion!
- Perform 2 or 3 huff breaths
- Cough when you feel the mucus collected in your breathing tubes
- Rest for awhile (5 to 10 breaths)
- Repeat the huffs until you feel you have cleared mucus or you become tired
- Try to do 3 to 5 cycles of huffing and resting

Control your cough ----- don't let it control you!

To create complete airway clearance therapy sessions, this handout should be used with the Active Cycle Breathing Technique handout