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UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL LLANDOUGH

ALL WALES ADULT CYSTIC FIBROSIS CENTRE Autogenic Drainage

Autogenic Drainage (AD) is a technique that was developed by Jean Chevallier in the 1960s', he noticed that children with severe asthma coughed and cleared more phlegm when playing than with traditional physiotherapy techniques.

He investigated the physiology behind this phenomenon and developed a regimen of breathing exercises in order to maximise clearance of secretions.

The Aim

To use breathing control exercises to move secretions from the smaller airways to the larger central airways to enable easier clearance of sputum.

The Technique

Points to remember throughout:

- Use relaxed breathing (diaphragmatic)
- Slowly breathe in through your nose
- Keep the upper airways open while breathing in and out
- Hold your breath for 1- 3 seconds after each breath in
- Breathe out with an "O" shaped mouth pushing the air out actively, but not forcefully
- Continue to breathe at each level until the mucus starts to collect and move upwards or you have done a set number of breaths
- Try not to cough until the end of each cycle

Breath stimulating position

Sit on the edge of your bed, in a sturdy chair or lay down – as discussed with your physiotherapist.

Clear nose and throat of any secretions

Diagnostic breath

To find which phase to start at, take a slow deep breath in and then out until there is no air left in your lungs. Notice at which point your chest begins to "rattle" (i.e. you can hear or feel secretions moving).

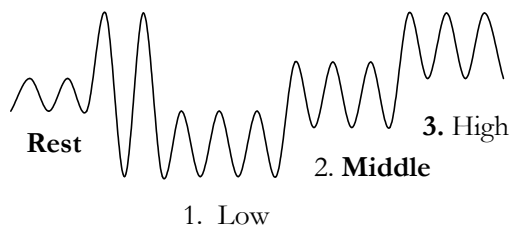
Does it rattle when you start to breathe out? Go to phase 3

Does it start to rattle half-way through breathing out? Go to phase 2

Does it not rattle or only at the end of breathing out? Go to phase 1

Graph depicting phases 1, 2 and 3 of AD within a normal lung volume range:

Deep breath



PHASE 1: Unstick

Breathing at low lung volume

Breathe all the way out until your lungs feel empty. Now breathe in until your lungs only have a moderate amount of air in them. Hold forsecs. Breathe all the way out until your lungs feel empty again. Repeattimes



Go to phase 2

PHASE 2: Collect

Breathing at middle lung volume

Breathe in until your lungs feel about half full. Hold. Now breathe out a little way, but not until your lungs feel empty. Repeat.....times forsecs.



Go to phase 3

PHASE 3: Evacuate

Breathing at high lung volume

Breathe in until your lungs feel full. Hold for secs. Now breathe out but only a little way. Repeat.....times



Forced expiratory technique

Use 1-2 high lung volume huffs or an effective cough to clear any phlegm.

Repeat phases 1-3 until your chest feels clear.

If you require any further information regarding Autogenic Drainage or any other physiotherapy techniques please do not hesitate to contact us -:

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