

# Deep Breathing and Coughing Exercises

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*Your guide to*  
**Doing Breathing & Coughing Exercises**

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## BREATHING & COUGHING EXERCISES

### **Q. WHY DO I NEED TO DO DEEP BREATHING AND COUGHING EXERCISES?**

- A.**
- When we are at rest, we usually do not breathe deeply enough to fully expand our lungs. By practising deep breathing we fully expand our lungs. This is particularly important when we are sick.
  - Breathing deeply often stimulates us to cough which helps to clear our lungs of mucus.
  - Breathing exercises also help to relieve stress and helps you to relax.
  - General exercise also helps you to take deeper breaths automatically.

### **Q. HOW OFTEN SHOULD I DO THESE EXERCISES?**

- A.**
- You should do 5 repetitions of these exercises at least 3 times a day. For example: morning, afternoon and evening.  
Stop if you feel light-headed!

### **Q. HOW DO I DO THESE EXERCISES?**

- A.**
- ◆ Keeping your shoulders relaxed and down, place your hand lightly on your abdomen below your rib cage.
  - ◆ Take a deep breath in slowly through your nose counting to 3, while pushing your hand out.

## BREATHING & COUGHING EXERCISES

- ◆ Purse your lips like an “O”, then blow the air out through your mouth slowly, counting to 3.
- ◆ Repeat 5 times and try to cough.

OR

- ◆ Hold a deep breath and then try to cough.

### **Q. WHAT ELSE SHOULD I DO TO IMPROVE MY BREATHING?**

- A.**
- ◆ If you smoke, **STOP!**
  - ◆ Do not allow others to smoke around you. Second-hand smoke is the cause of severe breathing problems.
  - ◆ Eat a balanced diet that includes vitamins and minerals and drink plenty of fluids. This protects your mucous membranes, which is your protective barrier against infections.
  - ◆ Talk to your physician or pharmacist about medications which may relieve your symptoms.
  - ◆ Call your physician if you develop a fever, produce green, pink or rust-coloured sputum, or have increased shortness of breath.
  - ◆ Stay active! Regular exercise, such as walking encourages your body to take deeper breaths automatically, in response to your body's increased need for oxygen.