

## Physiotherapy Department

# Breathing Control

Breathing control is a technique aimed at people with lung conditions who lack control over their breathing. Breathing control is simply normal breathing, using the lower chest, with relaxation of the upper chest and shoulders.

People who experience problems with their breathing frequently use the tops of their lungs to breathe, which is the most in-efficient way of breathing and actually makes breathing harder.

### Technique

First, get into a comfortable position where you are relaxed and well supported (this will be different for different people, but ask your physiotherapist if you are unsure).

Then place one hand on your stomach

Feel your hand rising as you gently breathe in through your nose (imagine a balloon inside your abdomen is inflating)

Sigh the air out – ensuring this is not forced.

If able, gradually try to increase the depth of your breathing whilst maintaining relaxation

### Advice

#### Do

- Practise in a comfortable position, keeping the shoulders relaxed
- Practise breathing control when you have some time to yourself
- Try to ensure there are no interruptions when practising
- Incorporate breathing control into your daily life with activities that cause you breathlessness
- It's not easy to do, but keep persevering!

#### Don't

- Hold your breath whilst performing breathing control



## Patient Information

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6183 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

### Document History

Author	Morag Clarke
Department	Physiotherapy Department
Contact Tel	26183
Published	December 2008
Reviewed	December 2009, April 2011, June 2016, Aug 2018
Review	Aug 2021
Version	5
Reference	HIC/LFT/781/08