

Breathing Control

When you feel short of breath, you may find that you naturally do one of the following:

- Use your shoulders and upper chest muscles to help you breathe.
- Increase your rate of breathing.
- Have feelings of fear, anxiety, panic or general unrest.

Although these are natural responses, they can make your breathlessness worse.

The aim of breathing control is to help steady and pace your breathing. The technique is described below:

- Get into a comfortable position and ensure your neck and shoulders are not tense.
- Let your shoulders fall into their natural resting position.
- Think about the way you are breathing and which parts of your chest are moving.
- Place a hand on the upper part of your stomach.
- Breathe in and out through your nose or mouth, whichever is most comfortable.
- As you breathe in your hand should rise a little.
- As you breathe out your hand should fall.
- Breathing out should not require any effort. Some people find it easier to breathe out through pursed lips. Only do this if you find it comfortable.



This technique takes a bit of practice. To begin with, practise the technique a couple of times per day in a quiet place.

You should begin by repeating the breathing control technique 5 to 10 times per session. This can be adjusted to what works best for you. The aim is to get your body used to using breathing control so it can be applied whenever you find it helpful.

You can then start to use this technique when you are feeling more breathless, when your symptoms get worse, or when you are exerting yourself for example when walking, climbing stairs or during other daily activities.

For further information, please contact **Acute Services Physiotherapy:**

Doncaster Royal Infirmary and Montagu Hospital,

Tel: 01302 366666 ext 3810.

Bassetlaw Hospital, Tel: 01909 500990 ext 2311.

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS staff are available to offer advice or information on healthcare matters. The office is in the Main Foyer (Gate 4) of Doncaster Royal Infirmary. Contact can be made either in person, by telephone or email. PALS staff can also visit inpatients on all Trust sites.

The contact details are:

Telephone: 01302 553140 or 0800 028 8059

