

Active Cycle of Breathing Technique (ACBT)

What is a ACBT?

It is an active breathing technique that aids in the clearing of phlegm from the lungs. It can be performed without any equipment.

Who will benefit from ACBT?

Any person with lung conditions who produce more phlegm than usual or have a weak cough effort. Retention of secretion increases the chances of developing a lung infection. Hence, it is crucial that secretion is cleared regularly.

In which position should I perform ACBT?

Choose a comfortable and upright position or a specific position as advised by your physiotherapist.



ACBT consists of 3 phases:

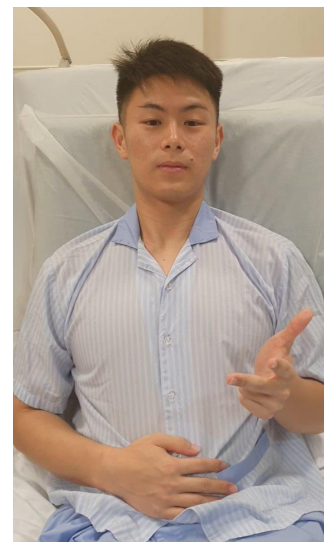
1. Breathing control

- Relax your shoulders and place one hand on your stomach.
- Breathe in and out, quietly and gently through your nose 3-5 times.
- This phase is to help you relax, so feel free to do this for as long as you require before moving on to the next.



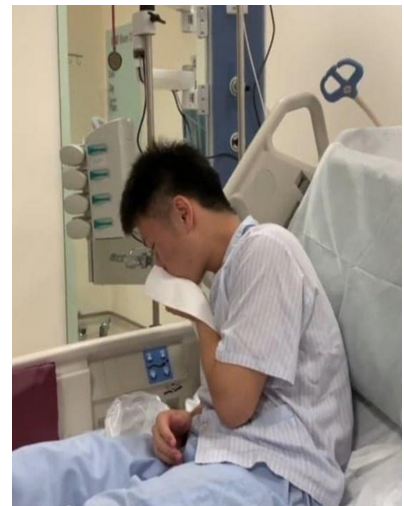
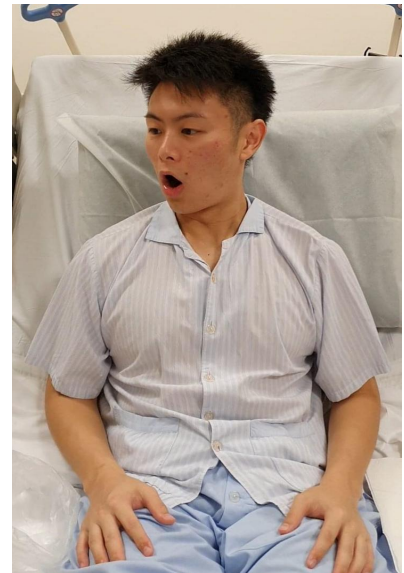
2. Deep breathing

- Ensure that your shoulders and chest remain relaxed.
- Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose until you feel your lowest chest expand.
- Hold your breath for 2 - 3 seconds.
- Breathe out gently through your mouth, almost like a sigh.
- Repeat for 3 - 5 breaths.

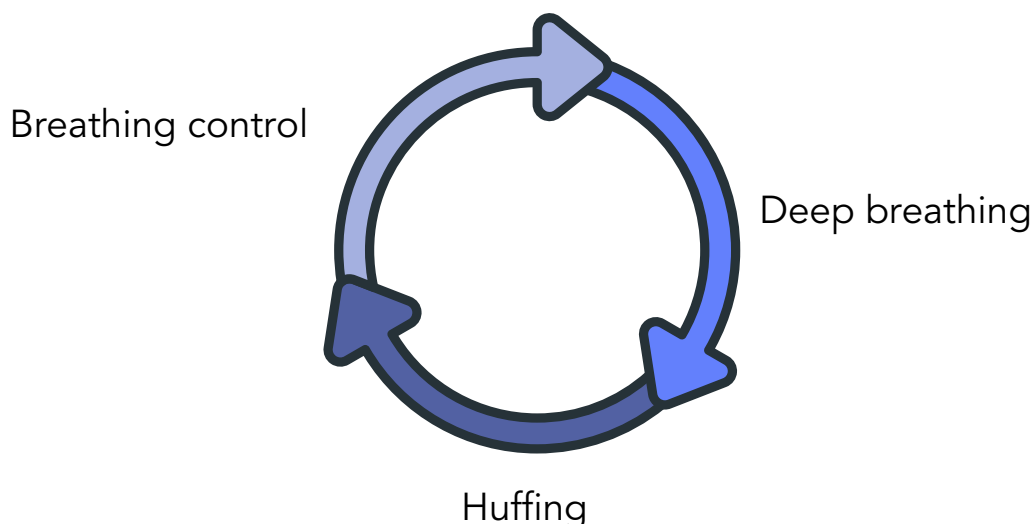


3. Huffing

- Take in a slow deep breath through your nose.
 - Exhale forcefully and continuously through an open mouth, in an attempt to squeeze all the air out from your lungs.
 - Repeat this 2 to 3 times.
 - If required, you may perform a strong cough to clear any remaining phlegm.
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- Perform 2 - 3 cycles of the above, or until the phlegm has been cleared.
 - Remember to face away from others and clear phlegm into a tissue for disposal.
 - Do take necessary breaks if you feel tired.



One cycle of ACBT



How often should I perform the ACBT?

You may need to perform the ACBT more frequently if you are having an ongoing lung infection. Once it is resolved, you may stop. If you have a chronic lung condition, your physiotherapist may advise you to continue with ACBT for long-term.

At what time of the day should I perform the ACBT?

If you have been prescribed with medications to loosen your secretions, it is recommended that you perform the ACBT after your medications. Avoid performing the ACBT immediately after meal times. For more information, speak to your doctor or physiotherapist.

Contributed by Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation, Allied Health Services

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Information shared is accurate as of April 2024 and subject to revision without prior notice.



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