

Guide to Using Bubble PEP

What is a Bubble PEP?

Bubble PEP (positive expiratory pressure) is a treatment that can be used by patients who are predisposed to producing larger amounts of phlegm. This can be commonly seen in conditions like Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and Asthma. To perform Bubble PEP, you will need to blow bubbles through a jug of water via a tubing.

How does Bubble PEP work?

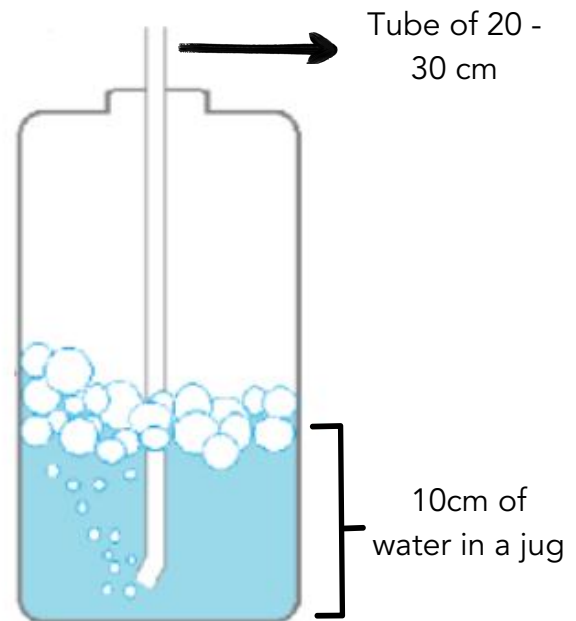
- As you take in a slow and deep breath, air is able to get behind the phlegm and push it up and out.
- Blowing air through a tubing helps to create pressure within the lungs. This pressure will help to open up the airways and allow for a greater uptake of Oxygen.
- With the airways open, it is easier for phlegm to move from the bottom of the lungs and up towards your mouth.
- The vibratory effect as a result of the bubbles will help loosen and move the secretions towards your mouth, making it easier for you to be to expectorate phlegm.

Safety advice

If you feel lightheaded while performing a Bubble PEP, stop immediately and monitor your symptoms. Inform your physiotherapist or doctor on the next review session about your giddiness. If you develop breathlessness, wheezing, chest discomfort or notice blood in your phlegm stop the treatment and consult a doctor immediately.

Preparation

1. Prepare 10cm of water in a jug.
Ensure the jug is deep enough to allow you to blow bubbles without spilling.
2. Place a tube (8mm) of 20 - 30cm into the water.



Cleaning a Bubble PEP device

The tubing and the bottle should be washed out daily and left to dry in a clean area until your next use. If you are using a disposable bottle, be sure to replace the bottle every week.

Using a Bubble PEP: a step-by-step instruction

1. Sit upright in a comfortable position.
2. Take in a slow, deep breath.
3. Blow out through the tubing to create bubbles for as long as you can. Aim to get the bubbles to the top of the jug each time. Do not suck in the water!
4. Repeat _____ minutes/times. This is one cycle.
5. At the end of each cycle or as required, perform a huff/cough to clear the secretions. To perform a huff, take in a slow deep breath. Hold your breath for 2 - 3 seconds. Exhale forcefully and continuously through an open mouth. Repeat this 2 or 3 times, then follow with a strong cough to clear any secretions.
6. Repeat this cycle for _____ times and perform this technique _____ times a day.

*You may need to perform bubble PEP for lifelong or you may be asked to stop once your lung infection improves. Your physiotherapist will advise you accordingly.

Contributed by Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation, Allied Health Services

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