

Breathing Exercise Using the Incentive Spirometer

Purpose

The purpose of the deep breathing exercise is to expand your lungs regularly and prevent breathing complications, such as pneumonia after surgery. This exercise improves your ability to clear mucous from your lungs. The spirometer should be used every 60 minutes while you are awake, or as directed by a member of your health care team. Lung cancer patients should use the spirometer every 15 to 30 minutes while awake, or as directed by their health care team.

Follow These Steps

1. If your condition allows, sit upright in a chair or raise the head of your bed to a sitting position to perform this exercise. **If in doubt, ask your nurse.**
2. Hold the incentive spirometer upright in front of you.
3. Exhale normally.
4. Place your lips firmly around the mouthpiece.
5. Breathe in slowly to raise the indicator, keeping it between the two arrows. (Figure 1)
6. Hold the indicator in place for at least 4 to 6 seconds (Figure 2), and ideally for as long as you can inhale.
7. Remove your lips from the mouthpiece and exhale slowly.

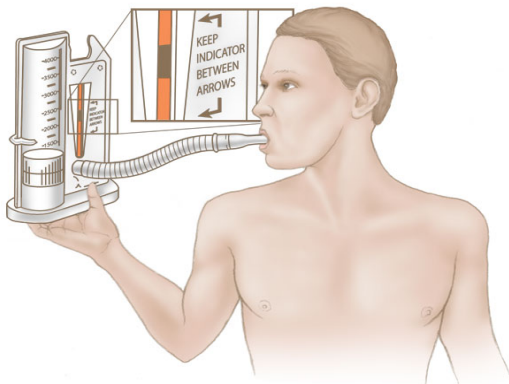


Figure 1

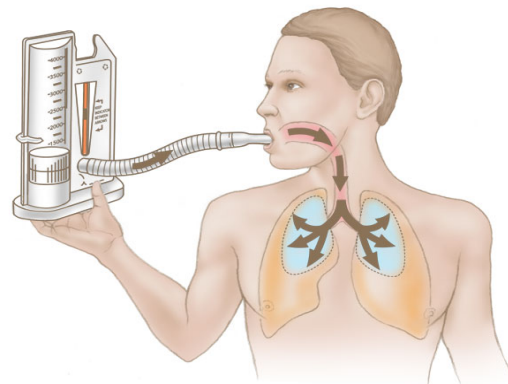


Figure 2

Helpful Tips

Rest for 5 to 10 seconds between exercises.

- If you experience dizziness or tingling or numbness in your fingers, take longer rest periods between each deep breath.
- Perform 10 to 20 deep breaths each time you do your deep breathing exercise.