

Coughing Techniques

Airway clearance methods help to remove mucus from your airways. Clearing the airways helps you breathe better. It also lowers the chance for infection. One method is controlled coughing. Use any medicines before or after clearing your airways, as instructed by your healthcare provider. For example, some people use inhaled bronchodilators before clearing their airways.

Tip

Keep a box of tissues next to you when using these methods. Wash your hands when you are done.

Controlled coughing

Here's how to do it:

- Sit on a chair with both feet on the floor.
- Take a slow, deep breath through your nose. Hold for 2 counts.
- Lean forward slightly.
- Cough twice—2 short coughs.
- Relax for a few seconds.

Repeat the steps as needed.

The “huff” technique



Here's how to do it:

- Sit on a chair with both feet on the floor.
- Take a slow, deep breath through your nose. Hold for 2 counts.

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- To breathe out, open your mouth and make a “huff” sound in your throat. (The same way you might breathe to clean a pair of eyeglasses.)
 - Huff 2 to 3 times as you breathe out.
 - Relax for a few seconds.

Repeat the steps as needed.

Follow-up care

Follow up with your healthcare provider, or as advised.

When to call the healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following:

- Shortness of breath, wheezing, or coughing
- Increased mucus
- Yellow, green, bloody, or smelly mucus
- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- Chills
- Tightness in your chest that does not go away with rest or medicine
- An irregular heartbeat