

Dyspnea (Difficulty Breathing) Pocket Card

Pursed Lip Breathing is a simple way to help control shortness of breath by slowing your pace of breathing, making each breath more effective.

How it Works

- Improves ventilation by releasing air trapped in the lungs
- Keeps your airway open longer thus reducing the work of breathing
- Extends exhalation resulting in slower breathing
- Moves old air out of your lungs allowing new air to enter
- Slowing the breathing also helps general relaxation

When to Use Purse Lip Breathing

- During activity such as bending, lifting, climbing stairs, or any activity that requires extra effort
- Practice 4-5 times a day to be sure you have the correct breathing pattern

Techniques of Pursed Lip Breathing

1. Relax your neck and shoulder muscles
2. Breathe in slowly through your nose with your mouth closed, taking in a normal breath
3. Purse your lips together like you are blowing out a candle or whistling
4. Breathe out slowly through your pursed lips while counting to four
5. Breathing out must be 3-4 times longer than breathing in, so do not force air out
6. Repeat steps 2 through 5 until shortness of breath is relieved

Activity/Energy

- Plan important or fun activities first. Limit unnecessary activity.
- Take rest periods during activities
- Perform grooming activities while sitting
- Keep frequently used items easily accessible
- Use a wheelchair as needed
- Wear flat shoes
- Wear loose, easy to put on clothes
- Avoid warm temperatures, unpleasant odors or fumes
- Establish a regular routing
- Ask for help and delegate tasks when you can