# AIRWAY CLEARING TECHNIQUES

**COPD Community Exercise Clinic**

Lakeridge Health

## Controlled coughing



While sitting, lean forward and take a deep breath in through your nose.
When exhaling, fold your arms across your lower chest and cough shortly but sharply a few times through your slightly opened mouth.
Breathe in again through your nose like you are sniffing.
When your lungs are full, continue with the controlled coughing.

## Huff Technique




This is the most effective technique for a majority of COPD patients.
While in a sitting position, lean slightly forward.
Take in a deep breath.
Then using your stomach muscles, make several short exhalations with your mouth open making a "ha, ha, ha" sound.
Keep some tissues handy to cough into.

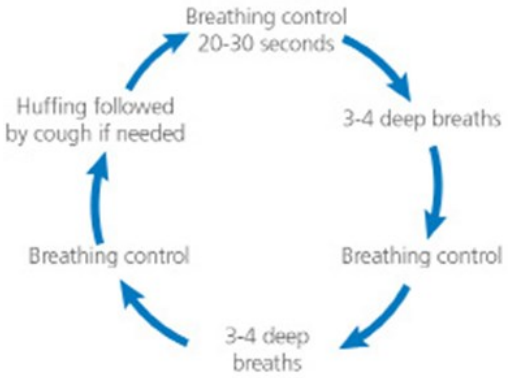
## Active cycle of breathing technique (ACBT)

This approach involves 3 steps:

Relax your airways by taking approximately 6 gentle breaths while placing one hand on your stomach as you breathe. You could use the pursed lip technique when breathing out (pursing your lips like you are kissing someone) to keep the airway open longer.

Breathe deeply using a 3-second breath hold to get air behind mucus and clear it. Chest clapping can help.

Use the huff coughing technique to help force the mucus out of your lungs.




## Airway Clearance Devices

This therapy can be used with the other therapies listed above. Handheld devices, such as positive expiratory pressure (PEP) devices, including a **lung flute,™ an Acapela™** or **Aerobika™** device, are small, plastic, non-prescription devices that create a vibration in your lungs when you exhale through the device. This loosens the mucus in your lungs, making it easier and more effective to cough mucus up and out.




## Mucolytic medications



Help by breaking down the chemical structure of mucus, making it less thick and sticky and therefore easier to cough up and out.