

Autogenic Drainage

Autogenic Drainage, or 'AD', is a breathing technique that uses controlled breathing and minimal coughing to clear secretions from your chest. It involves hearing and feeling your secretions as you breathe out and controlling the desire to cough until secretions are high up and easily reached with minimal effort.

Before you start:

- ☺ If prescribed, take DNase at least 1 -2 hours before physio.
- ☺ Make sure you have taken any 'blue' inhalers, known as bronchodilators, (e.g. salbutamol or bricanyl) at least 10 minutes before physio.

AUTOGENIC DRAINAGE

A 'test' breath

- Begin with some gentle relaxed breaths known as **breathing control**.
- Take a **very slow deep breath in** through your nose, to your absolute maximum possible.
- **Pause at the end of the full breath** with your mouth slightly open and count for 3-4 seconds. Start by sitting in a comfortable upright position.
- **Breathe out through your mouth**. This should be active (you can feel your tummy muscles tighten) but should not be forced.
- You should **listen and feel** for secretions crackling as you breath out
 - Are the crackles at the beginning, middle or end of your breath out?
 - Beginning = high up in large tubes of your chest
 - Middle = in the middle sized tubes
 - End = in the small tubes
- **UNSTICK SECRETIONS** - breathe as much air out of your chest as you can then take a **small breath in, using you tummy**, feeling your breath at the bottom of your chest. You may hear secretions start to crackle. Resist any desire to cough. Repeat for at least 3 breaths.
- **COLLECT SECRETIONS** - as the crackle of secretions starts to get louder change to **medium sized breaths in**. Feel the breaths more in the middle of your chest. Repeat for at least 3 breaths.
- **EVACUATE SECRETIONS** - when the crackles are louder still, take **long, slow, full breaths in** to your absolute maximum. Repeat for at least 3 breaths.

Follow with gentle but active huffs - this may be enough to clear secretions - and a cough if needed.

Try to stop yourself from coughing until the last phase of AD when the secretions are higher up, and are more ready to be coughed up. Try to relax with breathing control if you feel the desire to cough or between cycles. AD breaths are very gentle so you should not start to feel tight or wheezy. AD should be done until your sputum is cleared, or you need a rest.

As you become more familiar with AD you can use it in any position. Lying on your back with your knees bent is often very good. It is possible to use AD in conjunction with the Flutter®, the Cornet® or Acapella®. Please discuss this with your physio.

After physio:-

- ☺ If prescribed, take nebulised colomycin/promixin now.
 - ☺ Make sure you have taken all other prescribed inhalers after physio.
- If you are unwell please contact us so we can take a sputum sample or cough swab.