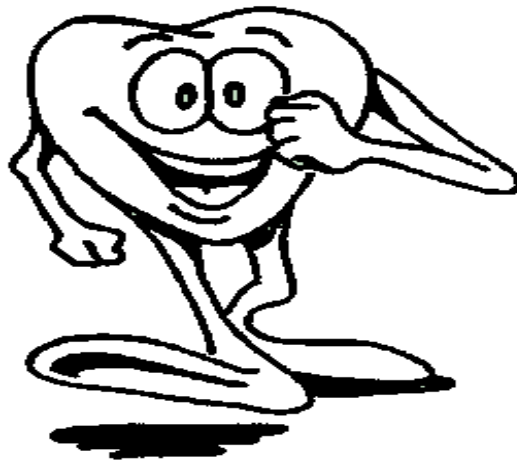


PHYSIOTHERAPY AND CARDIAC SURGERY

PRE-ADMISSION CLINIC INFORMATION



Physiotherapy Department
01-4162503

Role of the Physiotherapist after Cardiac Surgery

Physiotherapy is necessary to prevent any post-operative lung complications such as lung collapse and infection, to maximise your lung function as soon as possible after your surgery and to give you advice regarding exercise to help you obtain your pre surgery functional levels

Your physiotherapist will explain the normal routine after cardiac surgery as you progress from the intensive care unit to the ward.

On the first day after your surgery your physiotherapist will instruct you in breathing exercises and supported coughing techniques. This is very important to prevent any lung complications, especially if you are a smoker. Non-smokers may also develop chest problems post-operatively.

Smoking is one of the main causes of heart disease and should be stopped at all costs. Even by stopping now you can reduce the risk of complications after surgery.

It is important to remember that your incision area cannot be damaged by any post-operative exertions such as coughing. Examples of the breathing exercises are shown below. Try to practice these prior to your admission for surgery.

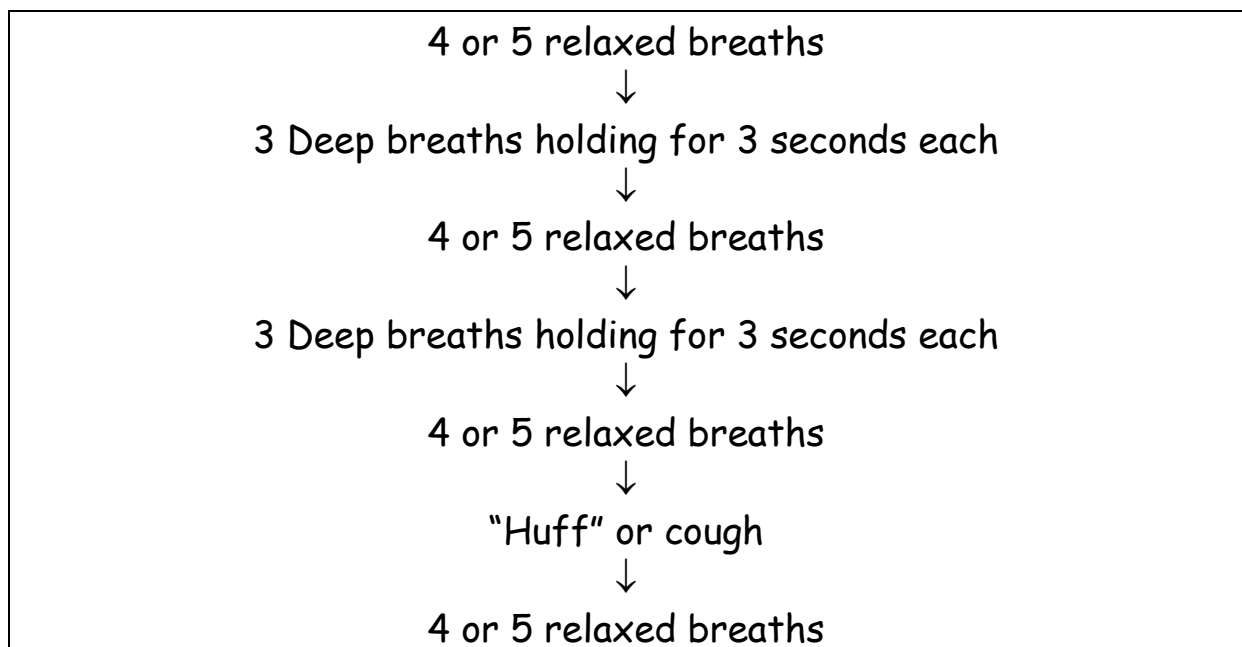
Breathing Exercises

Get yourself comfortable before you start.

For relaxed breaths, put one hand on your tummy and feel it rise up when you breathe in, and sink down when you breathe out.

A "huff" is a sharp breath out like fogging up a mirror but much stronger with your mouth in an O shape.

If you feel phlegm in the back of your throat after a huff, you may cough to clear it.



Do this until your chest clears, i.e. no phlegm for 2 huffs in a row, once per hour. If you have any questions, ask your physiotherapist.

Pain Control

- After your surgery pain relieving medications will be given to you frequently.
- It is extremely important that after your surgery your pain is well controlled in order for you to carry out your breathing exercises and be able to walk.

If you are in pain after your surgery please let the staff know and they will address this problem. Do not wait until it gets very bad or out of control as it will inhibit your recovery.

Mobilising

- The morning after your surgery your physiotherapist and the nursing staff will help you to sit out of bed. You will begin to walk short distances as soon as possible.
- The distance you walk will then be increased every day by your physiotherapist at a pace appropriate to your recovery.
- You may be surprised that mobilisation begins so soon after surgery but this is necessary to help your lungs return to normal function and to improve your lung function.
- If you use any mobilising aid such as a walking stick prior to surgery you should bring this with you into hospital as you will require it to assist your walking after surgery.

Stairs

Prior to your discharge your physiotherapist will practice the stairs with you to ensure you don't have any difficulties using them before you go home.

Home walking programme

An exercise programme individually tailored to your needs and abilities will be discussed with you by your physiotherapist prior to your discharge home. This will help you fully recover from your surgery and return to normal activities.



On Keith Shaw ward we will be encouraging you to get out of bed, get dressed in your own clothes and get active. This is because being active will help you recover quicker and you will feel better dressed in your day clothes. Please bring loose fitting comfortable clothing e.g. a shirt, pair of shorts or tracksuit bottoms and comfortable supportive footwear e.g. trainers.

*"Pyjamas say you're unwell...
Clothes say you're getting better"*

Shoulder / Neck / Upper back exercises

- After your surgery it will very common to feel some stiffness around your shoulders and neck.
- This is as a result of the incision in your breast bone and your physiotherapist will teach you exercises to help with this stiffness and give you some tips on good posture in different positions.
- Examples of these exercises are given below. It is recommended to practice these exercises prior to your admission into hospital.

These exercises should only be done within the limits of your comfort. Repeat each exercise 10 times each, 3 times per day

Example of Exercises



Gently bring your chin to your chest.
Feel a comfortable stretch in the
lower neck.



Gently extend your neck backward
until you face the ceiling.



Gently turn your neck to your right.
Hold for 10 seconds.
Then, turn to your left.



Gently shrug your shoulders up and
roll them backward.