

Acapella Therapy

Using an Acapella device to clear the lungs

An Acapella uses vibrations and positive pressure or resistance to clear mucus from the airways.

What is Acapella?

Acapella is a device used to help remove mucus from the lungs. It vibrates to loosen the mucus from the airway walls and keeps the airways open longer when you breathe out. This allows the mucus to travel up the airways.



How does the Acapella work?

When you exhale through the Acapella your breath moves a weighted lever up and down. This lever breaks up the airflow causing positive pressure and vibrations in the airway.

Steps for proper use of the Acapella:

1. Check to see that the dial at the end of the Acapella is set as instructed by the clinician. This dial sets the vibratory frequency and resistance during exhalation. The higher the resistance, the longer it will take you to exhale. Ideally, it should take you 3 times longer to exhale than inhale during this treatment. Your dial should be set at _____.
2. Sit with back straight and head slightly tilted back. You may find it helpful to sit with elbows resting comfortably on a table while holding the Acapella in your mouth.
3. Place mouthpiece lightly in your mouth. Maintain a seal around the mouthpiece. Nose clips maybe needed. If using a mask, apply it so there are no leaks around the mask when you exhale.
4. Relax and use your diaphragm (belly breathing) to bring a larger than normal breath into your lungs.

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To Learn More

- Respiratory Care Services
206-987-5194
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

5. Hold your breath for 2 to 3 seconds.
6. Exhale actively but not too forcefully to produce a steady vibration throughout exhalation. Exhalation should be 2 to 3 times as long as inhalation.
7. Perform 10 of these breaths. Remove the Acapella and do 2 low huffs followed by 2 high huffs and cough.

Low Huff:

Take a normal size breath using your diaphragm and hold it for 3 to 4 seconds. Exhale slowly and completely with your mouth open. It's like fogging a mirror.

High Huff:

Starting with your diaphragm take the deepest breath you can and hold it for 3 to 4 seconds. Keep your head up and mouth open as you produce a high-speed, short huff.

Steps 1 through 7 equals a SET. You should do 4 to 6 SETS each treatment.

Treatment Plan:

When you have more secretions you may need to increase the treatment length or the number of treatments each day.