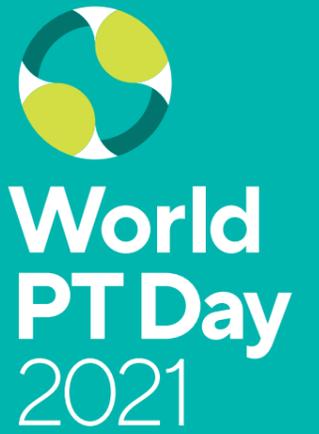
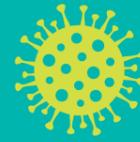


Breathing exercises



Breathing exercises can help your lungs recover after COVID-19. As well as helping you deal with feelings of anxiety and stress, breathing exercises can help restore diaphragm function and increase lung capacity. Breathing should be effortless and quiet - if you can hear your breathing you may be working too hard.

A physiotherapist can guide you through the following exercises.

1 Breathing exercise while on your back

Lie on your back and bend your knees so that the bottom of your feet are resting on the bed.

2 Breathing exercise while on your stomach

Lie on your stomach and rest your head on your hands to allow room to breathe.

3 Breathing exercise while sitting

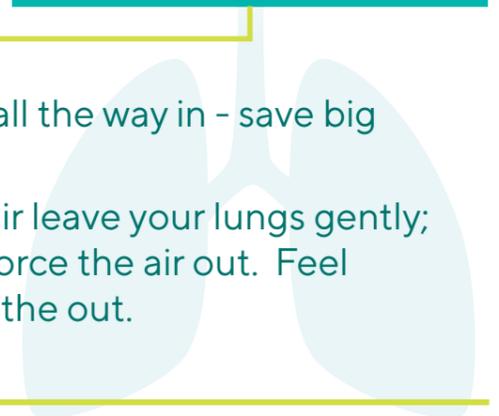
Sit upright on the edge of a bed or in a sturdy chair.

4 Breathing exercise while standing

Stand upright and place your hands around the sides of your stomach.

- Place your hands on top of or around the sides of your stomach.
- Keep your mouth closed throughout.
- Breathe in gently through your nose and feel your stomach rise/expand.

- You don't have to breathe all the way in - save big breathing for activity.
- As you exhale, just let the air leave your lungs gently; you don't have to push or force the air out. Feel tension release as you breathe out.
- Repeat for one minute.



5 Yawn to a smile breathing exercise

- Sit upright on the edge of your bed or in a sturdy chair.
- Reach arms overhead and create a big stretching yawn.
- Bring your arms down and finish by smiling for three seconds.
- Repeat for one minute.

This exercise incorporates motion with deep breathing, which helps increase coordination and build strength in the arms and shoulders. It also opens up the muscles in your chest to give the diaphragm space to expand.

6 Humming breathing exercise

- Sit upright on the edge of your bed or in a sturdy chair.
- Place your hands around the sides of your stomach.
- With your lips closed, breathe in gently through your nose and feel your stomach rise/expand.
- Once your lungs are full, keep your lips closed and exhale while humming, making the "hmmmmmm" sound. Notice how your hands lower back down.
- Again, inhale through your nose, then exhale through your nose while humming.
- Repeat for one minute.

This information has been adapted from the following sources:

www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-recovery-breathing-exercises;

www.physiotherapyforbpd.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/YOUR-Guide-to-Good-Breathing.pdf

Do not begin exercises, and contact your doctor, if you have: a fever; shortness of breath or difficulty breathing while resting; chest pain or palpitations; new swelling in your legs.

STOP exercise immediately if you develop any of the following symptoms: dizziness; shortness of breath more than normal; chest pain; cool, clammy skin; excessive fatigue; irregular heartbeat; any symptoms you consider an emergency.