

Breathe Easy



**Northern
Ireland
Hospice**



Breathe in, breathe out. Now repeat.

For most of us these are straightforward instructions which don't involve much thought. For those suffering from breathlessness however, it is not always so easy.

Here at Northern Ireland Hospice the Breathe Easy Clinic offers treatment for management of breathlessness and associated anxiety.

The Breathe Easy Clinic is a service provided by the physiotherapist, with access to other members of the Hospice team where appropriate.

Our aim is to give you the tools to manage your breathlessness by learning breathing and relaxation exercises. We can also offer advice about some activities you may have difficulty with because of your breathlessness.

The Breathe Easy Programme usually involves coming to see us once a week, for four weeks:

- Week 1 – Assessment and breathing control.
- Week 2 – Dealing with breathlessness, relaxation and some useful tips.
- Week 3 – Exercises.
- Week 4 – Review.

Breathing control

Breathing control is gentle breathing using your lower chest. It is sometimes called diaphragmatic breathing and it can help you manage your activities of daily living, such as dressing, walking, climbing stairs and shopping.

Some useful tips:

• Showering and bathing

- Try not to fill the bath too full.
- Don't have the water too hot.
- After your bath/ shower use a toweling dressing gown. This reduces the effort needed to dry yourself.

• Dressing and undressing

- Sit down as much as possible while dressing.
- Avoid tight fitting clothes around the chest and waist.

• Talking on the telephone

- Take a moment to catch your breath before you pick up the telephone.
- Don't talk quickly, or in long sentences. Remember to stop frequently to take a breath.

Exercises

A daily exercise programme is a good routine to follow, and even more important if you experience breathlessness. At the Breathe Easy Clinic we will give you advice on choosing the right form of exercise for you.

Relaxation

Breathlessness may lead to increased tension, which can cause hunched shoulders or tense muscles. Relaxation techniques can help you reduce the level of tension or anxiety in your body, allowing you to breathe more easily.

Appointments

Appointments to the Breathe Easy Clinic can be made by contacting a member of the Hospice team who will make arrangements with the Physiotherapy Department.

*Help us
to continue
caring*



There is no charge for hospice care. It is available on the basis of need. We depend mainly upon legacies and donations to provide this service. From making a donation, to taking part in an event, or leaving us a gift in your Will, find out how you can help more patients receive the care and support they need. Visit nihospice.org or contact our fundraising team on **028 9078 1836** or email fundraising@nihospice.org

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Publication Date: December 2010
Charity Number XN 45696