

Treatment for your chest using the Acapella device

Paediatric Physiotherapy

Information for Patients

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What is the Acapella?

The Acapella device uses positive expiratory pressure (PEP) and vibration to help with your chest treatment. The device is made of plastic and has a rocker with magnets inside.



How does the Acapella device work?

- When you breathe out through the device you cause a small amount of pressure to build up in your lungs. At the same time, the rocker in the device moves like a see-saw (about 15 times every second). You will feel a vibration in your chest.
- The pressure holds your airways open and moves more air in and out of your lungs.
- This air flow and the vibrations help to move mucus (secretions) out of your lungs and into your top airways.
- When mucus is in your top airways you can huff and cough it up.

Why do I need to use the Acapella?

If you have a problem with your lungs there is sometimes more mucus in your airways.

If this mucus is not cleared with treatment, it can cause chest infections, damage to your airways or make your breathing more difficult.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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How do I use my Acapella?

Your physiotherapist will show you how to use your device. They will also tell you when to do your treatment:

1. Wash your hands
2. Take your inhalers or nebulisers that you have been prescribed to prepare your airways, before clearing your airway with the Acapella:

3. Put the mouthpiece of your device between your teeth and close your lips around it. Make sure there is a good seal around the device.
4. Take a slightly bigger than normal breath in through your mouth.
5. Hold your breath for _____ seconds.
6. Blow out through the mouthpiece. Keep your cheeks held in, as far as is comfortable. Let your breath out slightly stronger than normal, but not too forceful. You will feel the vibrations from the Acapella in your chest.
7. Repeat for _____ breaths.
8. Do _____ huff(s).
9. Do a strong cough. Try not to swallow your mucus (sputum). Spit it out into a tissue and throw it away.
10. You should have a period of relaxed breathing in between each cycle before doing the next cycle.
11. Repeat the steps above _____ times (cycles) when you are well. Repeat the steps above _____ times (cycles) when you are unwell, or as many times as you need to until your chest feels clear.
12. Take your inhalers or nebulisers that you have been prescribed after clearing your airway:

13. Do this airway clearance for your chest as above _____ times a day when you are well. Do it _____ times a day when you are unwell.

What if I have problems using my Acapella?

If your device looks damaged or your medical condition has changed, please contact your physiotherapist before using the device again.

If you do not know how to contact your physiotherapist you can contact the Paediatric Physiotherapy Department on 0116 258 5714.

If you are out of breath when using the device, or have blood in your mucus (sputum), please contact your doctor before using the device again.

How do I look after my Acapella?

Your physiotherapist will show you how to clean your device.

Do this after every time you use it:

- Separate it into its different parts.
- Wash all the parts with warm soapy water.
- Rinse all the parts with clean water.
- Shake off the excess water. Leave the parts to dry on a clean surface.
- When you are not using your device store it in a clean air tight container.
- Ask an adult to sterilise your device once a week. They should do this by boiling it in water for 10 minutes.



Other information

Do not use the device straight after you have had a meal.

Remember to do daily physical exercise. This will help clear mucus from your lungs. It will also help keep your muscles and joints healthy. Do not use physical exercise instead of your Acapella treatment though.

Bring your device with you to clinic appointments and physiotherapy appointments, or if you have a stay in hospital. This is so that a physiotherapist can check how you are using it.

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