

# COPD

## Controlled Coughing



### Q: What is Controlled coughing?

**A:** With Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) it is important to do controlled coughing sessions. Coughing helps get the mucous out of your lungs so you can breath better. It is always good to remember to do your controlled coughing exercise **AFTER** you have used your inhaled bronchodilator (inhaler).

### To perform controlled coughing:

1. Sit up straight but lean your head forward
2. Take a slow deep breath through your nose and hold it for 2-3 seconds.
3. Cough once to loosen the mucous.
4. Cough again to move the mucous forward.
5. Use short small coughs avoid large heavy coughs.
6. Try not to inhale between the first and second cough.
7. If you need to inhale, inhale slowly and not too deeply.
8. Wait a few seconds
9. Gently inhale (too big a breath could move mucous in the opposite direction).
10. Relax and then repeat steps 1-5 \_\_\_\_ times or until you feel you have cleared your airway.
11. If you actually cough up mucous, spit it into a tissue. Throw the tissue away and be sure to wash your hands.

### Q: How can I help thin my mucous?

**A:** To keep mucous thin you should drink lots of water or other caffeine-free drinks every day. Drinking 8-16 cups of fluid should help however check with your physician to make sure you shouldn't limit your fluid intake which could make your condition worse.

### Q: How can I check for infection?

#### **A: Follow these instructions:**

1. When you cough up mucous always spit it into a tissue.
2. Check the color. Yellow or green colored mucous could mean you have an infection.
3. If your mucous is yellow or green contact your doctor, because you may need antibiotics.
4. If you are given a prescription for antibiotics remember to take all of your medicine to get rid of the infection.
5. The mucous you cough up into the tissue is filled with bacteria. Throw the tissue away and wash your hands.

**IMPORTANT: Always talk with your doctor before taking cough medicine.**

**For Pulmonary questions and concerns, call 423.778.COPD (2673).**

