

Patient Information Leaflet

Physiotherapy Department

Flutter

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The Flutter[®] is a small pipe shaped device which is made up of four parts: a mouth piece, a semicircular cone, a steel ball and a perforated cover. During the breath out the ball moves up and down in the cone. This interrupts the flow of air and gives an intermittent “back pressure” to the airways and keep them open wide. This also allows air to get behind sputum and help move it upwards. The vibrations transmitted through the chest wall by the action of the steel ball also help to loosen sputum (phlegm) from the sides of the airways.



Please refer to the video link on YouTube to follow the technique (PLYMOUTHNHSPHYSIO):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0-AHtJHzw4>

Using the Flutter[®]

- You can use the Flutter[®] in sitting position only.
- Do a few relaxed slow breaths before using the Flutter[®].
- Make sure you form a tight seal with your lips around the mouthpiece.
- Keep your cheeks held in to get maximum vibrations felt in your lungs.
- Take a breath in through your nose slightly bigger than normal but not a full deep breath.
- Breathe out through the Flutter[®] but not forcing the air out.
- The angle at which the Flutter[®] is held will change the area where the vibrations are felt and so it should be held at an angle where maximum vibrations are felt within the chest.

- Breathe out for approximately 3-5 seconds so that you can feel vibrations in your chest.
- Breathe out as far as comfortable but do not breathe all the way out.
- Try to suppress your cough.
- Repeat 8-10 breaths. Rest after 3-4 breaths if breathless.
- Do a few more relaxed slow breaths without the Flutter[®].
- Then huff as directed 1-2 times.
- Repeat this for 10-15 minutes or as advised by your Physiotherapist or until you have cleared all your sputum (phlegm).

How often?

- Try to use your Flutter[®] twice daily or as directed by your Physiotherapist.
- If you are unwell or have an active chest infection you may need to increase this to 3-4 times per day to clear the excess secretions in your lungs.
- If you are unwell and using the Flutter[®] several times a day you may need to reduce how long you do it for each time to avoid getting too tired.

Cleaning the Flutter[®]

- After each use take apart your Flutter[®] into pieces.
- Wash it in warm soapy water and rinse thoroughly with clean water.
- Allow parts to air dry.

Sterilising

- Your Flutter[®] should be sterilised at least once a week.
- Sterilise it by putting the Flutter[®] in a clean bowl of boiling water.
- Flutter[®] can also be steam sterilised.
- Do not microwave.

Storing

- Do not store the Flutter[®] on a windowsill or direct sunlight.
- Place it in the bag provided or in a clean plastic container.
- Store it in a dust free environment.

If you have any adverse reaction, stop using the Flutter[®] and seek medical advice.

Please use this technique only if assessed and advised by a Physiotherapist.

This information sheet is available in large print and other formats and languages. Please contact:
Physiotherapy Department
Tel: 0845 155 8208

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