

Patient Information Leaflet

Physiotherapy Department

Acapella

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The Acapella[®] is a small hand held device for airway clearance. It has both resistive and vibratory features, which help loosen, mobilise and clear sputum (phlegm) from your chest.



The equipment consists of a detachable mouth piece, lid/cover and a platform base. The base unit has an assembly with a counterweighted plug and magnet with an adjustable dial.

When you breathe out through Acapella[®], the air flows through the counterweighted plug. This causes the vibration and resistance to your airflow which is then transmitted to your lungs. The resistance to the airflow will help keep your airways open to get air behind the sputum and help it move upwards.

The vibrations will help to loosen secretions from airways and move them up more easily for effective chest clearance. The dial at the end of the Acapella[®] varies the resistance to the airflow which changes how easy or difficult it is to breathe out.

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOvonQVCE6Y>



Using the Acapella®

- You can use the Acapella® in sitting, lying down or any other postural drainage positions as advised.
- Do a few relaxed slow breaths before using the Acapella®.
- 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 Acapella® but not forcing the air out.
- 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 Acapella®.
- Then huff as directed 1-2 times.
- Repeat this for 10-15 minutes in the position advised by your Physiotherapist or until you have cleared all your sputum.

How often?

- Try to use your Acapella® 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 Acapella[®] several times a day you may need to reduce how long you do it for each time to avoid getting too tired.

Cleaning the Acapella[®]

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

Sterilising

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

Storing

- Do not store the Acapella[®] 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 Acapella[®] 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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