



## Asthma - Reactive Airway Disease

### Clearing Your Lungs

Respiratory Care Department

You can help prevent shortness of breath and lung infections by keeping your lungs free of mucus. **Controlled coughing** (coughing in time with your breathing), **postural drainage** (lying with your chest lower than your abdomen), and **chest percussion** (lightly clapping your chest) can help you loosen and expel mucus from your lungs. Drinking plenty of fluids will help keep your mucus thin and easier to bring up.

#### Controlled Coughing

Constant, uncontrolled coughing can wear you out and make you short of breath. Sitting in the correct position and using deep breathing can help you control coughing and remove mucus more easily. Whenever you need to cough, repeat this exercise until you bring up the excess mucus.

1. **Sit on a chair** with both feet on the floor. Fold your arms across your upper abdomen.  
**Take a slow, deep, breath** through your nose and hold for two (2) counts.
2. **To exhale, lean forward** slightly and cough twice – two (2) short, sharp coughs. As you cough, use your arms to push on your abdomen.
3. **Relax for a few seconds.** Then repeat steps 1 – 2 as needed.

**Note:** Be sure to keep a box of tissues beside you.