

Breathing Problems

Just the Facts

Difficulty breathing may occur during your treatment. The symptoms include feeling short of breath, wheezing, and cough. A number of things can cause breathing problems: infection in the lungs, fluid in the lungs, or bleeding. The most common cause is infection. Do everything you can to prevent irritation and infection in the lungs. Exercise and breathing clean air helps the lungs function optimally.

Your Goals:

- ✓ Keep the lungs healthy.
- ✓ Call for professional help when needed.



Emergency Signs and Symptoms:

Call 911 IMMEDIATELY if:

- ☐ Unable to breathe.
- ☐ Choking/not able to move air.

Urgent Signs and Symptoms:

Call the Clinic or the After Hours Clinic NOW if:

- ☐ Feeling short of breath/cannot get enough air.
- ☐ Trouble breathing when lying flat.
- ☐ Tightness or wheezing with each breath.
- ☐ Uncontrollable cough.
- ☐ Coughing blood or green/yellow sputum.

Important Signs and Symptoms:

Report symptoms to doctor or nurse during clinic hours today.

- ☐ New or recurrent cough.
- ☐ Gets “winded” more easily with minimal activity.

What You Can Do At Home:

Keep lungs healthy.

- ➡ Do not smoke or be around smoke.
- ➡ Daily exercise. This helps expand the lungs and improves oxygen exchange and blood flow.
- ➡ Upright position lets the lungs expand and exchange oxygen better. For example, during the day sitting is better than lying flat. Standing up and moving really let the lungs expand.
- ➡ Avoid wearing any clothing that restricts breathing.
- ➡ Avoid contact with any person who has signs of respiratory infection (cold, fever, sneezing, runny nose, etc.)

Call for professional help when needed.

- ➡ Call for help right away when you have a problem with breathing. The sooner treatment can be started the more likely the treatment will work.