

Pelvic floor exercises

Your pelvic floor can be strained by excessive coughing. Each cough is like a bounce on the pelvic floor muscles, which form a sling between the base of the spine and the front of the pelvic girdle. Strengthening your pelvic floor muscles help prevent leaking and embarrassment.

Exercise

Feet slightly apart, close back passage and tighten front passages, drawing them up inside.

Hold for a count of four.

Let go slowly.

Do not hold your breath and avoid tightening your buttocks and tummy muscles.

Practice

Little and often, in different positions, e.g. lying with knees up, sitting, standing. Practice on the telephone, at the sink, waiting for the kettle to boil, at the bus stop

or train station, in the supermarket queue, or even during the adverts on TV. In other words, anywhere, anytime!

(Adapted from Jane Goudge, Physio Eastbourne DGH)

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Hospiscare serves the area from Okehampton in the west through Tiverton and Exeter to Axminster and Seaton in the east.

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Managing a dry cough

Helpful strategies in managing a cough



Information for patients, families and carers

www.hospiscare.co.uk

Coughing can be a distressing symptom if it is persistent, dry or productive. Inflammation, irritation or excessive secretions cause a cough.

Dry cough

A dry cough does not produce phlegm or sputum. It can be caused by an inflammation, such as post nasal drip or irritants to the airways such as strong smells cigarette smoke, or even a change in air temperature especially if mouth-breathing.

Discuss your symptoms

It is important that you discuss any cough symptoms with your doctor or nurse, even if you find this embarrassing. They may want to examine your mouth or your chest to exclude oral infections such as thrush.

Strategies that help a dry cough

Try to increase your fluid intake - drink plenty of water

Sucking sweets or lozenges may help

Drink warm honey and water

Cough linctus may be prescribed or provided by your pharmacist or doctor

Your nurse may advise a morphine based medicine which your doctor will prescribe

Cough suppression

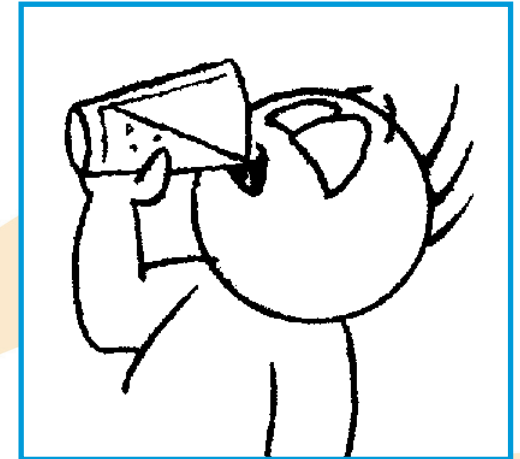
Coughing needs to be suppressed if the cough is dry and irritates the airways, if it brings on a severe fit of coughing, or if it causes distress.

Here are a few suggestions that may help you to stop coughing.

- Swallow
- Take sips of water, lemon juice or cold green grape juice
- Breathe through your nose
- Take repeated short sniffs
- Take slow or shallow breaths
- Breathe out through pursed lips

- Suck ice pops, lozenges or frozen green grapes (seedless)
- Breathing in steam from hot water, you could add a drop or two of Eucalyptus essential oil
- Drink a cup of warm honey and lemon
- For a night time cough, avoid lying on your back
- Occasionally one brief dry cough will settle it (like scratching an itch).

(Reference: adaptation from Alex Hough - Physiotherapy in Respiratory Care)



Try to drink more