

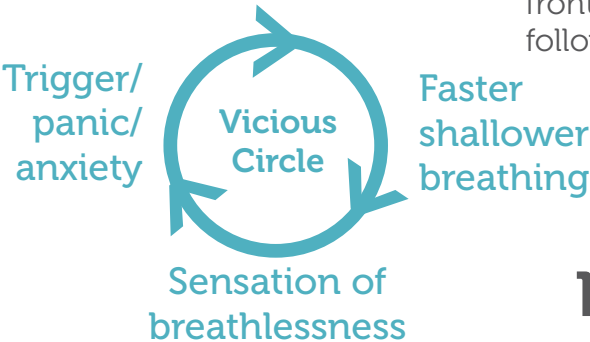
Breathlessness

Living with breathlessness can be challenging.

This leaflet offers you some suggestions to help you manage your breathing and continue to do the things that you enjoy.

Whilst it is normal to get breathless when we exercise, certain illnesses can cause us to become short of breath more quickly. This can be frightening. This fear may cause you to breathe more quickly and shallowly.

Your breathing will be less efficient if your lungs are not fully emptied before a new breath is taken.



Write a list of things that trigger your breathlessness.

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It will help to have this list in front of you as you read the following advice.

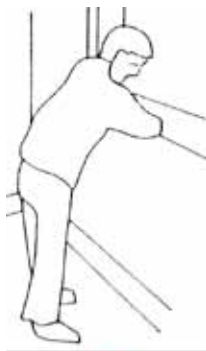


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Positioning

Being in a comfortable, well supported position will help you to control your breathing. Try one of these:



As you begin to feel breathless:

Relax any tension in your shoulders, arms and hands and breathe / sigh out. A full out breath will allow more room for fresh air to get into your lungs.

If possible, breathe in through your nose, rather than your mouth, as this allows the air to be moistened and warmed before it gets to your lungs.

When you've practised these techniques, you can also try to relax the tension in your jaw and neck muscles as you continue this breathing pattern.

**Piece your day
together with
'P' words**

Potter!
Move with
relaxed and
rhythmical
movements.
Don't rush!

The impossible
can become
possible if
properly
planned

Pause for thought!
Warn people that
you'll take a while to
answer the door or
phone.
Don't rush!

Plan your
activities
and allow
enough
time

Prioritise - is it
necessary?

Pace yourself:
balance activity
with rest (don't
do all the stairs
at once, stop if
necessary)

Pick out **p**erch
points: things to
lean/rest against

Plan
environment
(place regularly
used items within
easy reach)

For more information please

Call: 01803 210849 Or visit: www.rowcrofthospice.org.uk



Other tips

- Relaxing, stretching and then relaxing your hands and jaw will often help you to relax and regain control over your breathing
- Use a fan on your face or open a window – movement of air across your face will help to relax your breathing
- Clothing – wear loose fitting, comfortable clothing
- Diet – smaller, more frequent meals of soft/easily chewed food are easier to manage if you are feeling breathless
- Finding a hobby or activity to help you relax is a good way to distract you from your breathlessness. For example, reading and crafts can be relaxing.

Further advice

Further advice can be sought from your doctor, nurse, physiotherapist, occupational therapist.

Rowcroft Hospice also runs courses designed to teach people to understand and manage their breathing.

If you require this information in an alternative format please call 01803 210844