

Tips for  
managing  
breathlessness  
at home

# BREATHLESSNESS QUICK REFERENCE

## CONSERVE YOUR ENERGY & PACE YOURSELF

**Plan your day:** Will I have time for a break?

**Prioritise tasks:** What's most important?

**Adapt tasks:** Can it be done easier?

**Delegate:** Can someone else help?



## USE A FAN

Use either a hand-held fan, free-standing fan, a desktop fan, or the breeze through an open door or window. Hold the fan about 15 centimetres from your face so you can feel the air on your top lip.



## CHANGE YOUR POSITION



- Lean forward with arms resting on your knees or the sides of a chair and position knees slightly apart.



- Lean forward over a table or surface resting on your arms up on some pillows or similar.



- Lean forward with arms resting on a surface eg supermarket trolley, or back of a chair. Alternately rest standing with your back against a wall.

## BREATHING TECHNIQUES

- Breathing Control/Tummy Control:** Place hands on tummy, breathe in (tummy goes out), breathe out (tummy goes in)
- Pursed-Lip Breathing:** Breathe in through your nose, breathe out like through a straw
- Blow as you Go:** Breathe in before exerting effort, breathe out while making the effort
- Paced Breathing:** Breathe in for a few counts, breathe out for a few counts
- Breathe around the rectangle**

## DISTRACTION & MEDITATION

Focus on things that bring you pleasure or calmness, such as mindfulness or meditation.



## EXERCISE

Regular activity should be done in moderation. Ask to be referred to your local pulmonary rehabilitation program.

## TAKE YOUR MEDICATION

Use your prescribed medication as directed. If you have difficulty managing your breathlessness, talk to your healthcare professional as there may be other medications that may help.



## WHEN FEELING BREATHLESS...



Stop what you're doing



Rest your position



Use your fan



Start your breathing technique