

Autogenic Drainage (AD)

What is AD?

Autogenic Drainage means 'self drainage.' This method uses your breathing speed and depth to clear mucus from your lungs. AD requires you to concentrate on your breathing so that you can focus on where each breath is going inside your lungs.

During AD you should aim to feel and hear the mucus moving as you breathe. Huffing and coughing should be controlled during breathing, and done at the end of each cycle.

Positioning

AD is usually done sitting or lying on your back with a pillow under your knees.

AD has three phases

1. Unstick
2. Collect
3. Evacuate

Unstick

- Sit/lie quietly and relax your breathing
- Take a slightly larger breath than normal, hold the breath for 2-3 seconds
- Breathe out completely - slow and gentle - try and empty all the air out
- Then take a small breath - hold for 2-3 seconds and then breathe out completely again.
- Continue these breaths until you feel a slight vibration in your lungs when the mucus starts to move.

Important:

- Aim to breathe out completely. This will be difficult to do but is important to be able to shift mucus from the deeper parts of your lungs
- Don't force the air out or cause a wheeze - this will shut your airways down
- The breath hold for 2-3 seconds is important to push air behind the mucus.

Collect

- Increase your breaths to more normal sized breaths, continue to hold each breath for 2-3 seconds
- Breathe out slowly to the end of your normal breath
- **Continue these breaths until you feel a slight vibration in your lungs when the mucus starts to move.**

Evacuate

- Take larger than normal breaths - hold for 2-3 seconds
- Exhale with sigh/huff.

Important:

Try not to cough until you feel the mucus is high in your throat. Try to keep your cough controlled at all times.

Repeat the entire cycle until you feel 'clear'. This may take 30-40 min.

When beginning AD the 3 phases are separate - once you have learnt to 'listen' to your chest it will become more like a cycle of breaths of different depths. AD takes practice and time to master.

