

Positions to ease breathlessness

Breathlessness advice



This information is designed to help you manage your current breathlessness. If your breathing is getting worse, changing or is a new symptom it is important you get medical advice.

Certain body positions may help manage your breathing after activity or when resting. The pictures show examples of commonly used positions, you may find other positions work best for you.

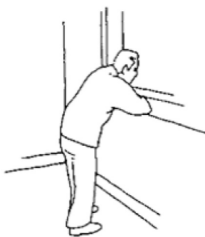


How positioning eases breathlessness

These positions involve placing the arms to enable the breathing accessory muscles to help with breathing. Leaning forward may also help the movement of the diaphragm – the main muscle involved in breathing.

Recovery Positions

Aim to try and relax the hands, wrists, shoulders neck and jaw as much as possible. Try different positions to find out what works best for you.



When sitting, support the arms to help relax the neck and shoulders. Your feet should be resting on the floor or the footrest of your chair.

When leaning forward the arms can be supported on a table or with pillows or rest on your thighs.

Walking aids

Some people notice that they can walk more easily when pushing a supermarket trolley – this is because leaning forward with your arms supported is allowing the accessory muscles to support the diaphragm with breathing. A walking frame, or stick can help you walk further when out and provide something to sit or lean on when you need to rest. You can combine these positions with the fan or breathing techniques that you find helpful.'

