

Patient information

Bubble PEP

What is Bubble Pep?

PEP stands for Positive Expiratory Pressure. Bubble PEP is a treatment to help individuals who have a build up of phlegm (secretions) in their lungs. Bubble PEP can be used by individuals who have difficulty clearing secretions. Children have to be at least 3 years old in order to understand the principles of Bubble PEP and therefore use it. During treatment, you will be encouraged to blow big bubbles through water.

How Does Bubble Pep work?

You will be encouraged to blow down the tubing into the water, and make bubbles. This creates positive pressure back up the tubing and into your airways and lungs. Air enters and leaves the lungs via the airways, not only are they the direct routes for the air to travel but also interconnecting routes/ channels through which the air can move between smaller airways. This is called collateral ventilation. By using positive pressure during breathing out or expiration, the air can use these interconnecting routes to get behind the secretions and move them further up and out of the lungs. The sputum can then be coughed up and cleared. The positive pressure also splints the airways open.

How to do Bubble Pep?

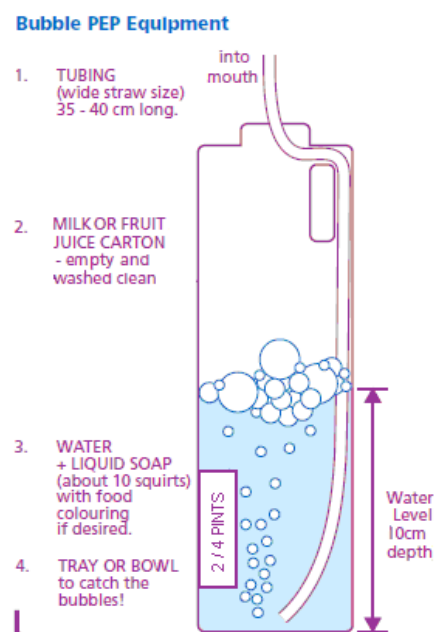
Your physiotherapist will show you how to do bubble PEP. This guide is a reminder for you:

What equipment is needed?

1. A clean, 2 or 4 pint plastic, milk or fruit juice bottle with a flat base.
2. A piece of tubing about 40cm long. Your physiotherapist will be able to provide you with this.
3. A plastic tray or container that can get wet - Bubble Pep can get quite messy!
4. Washing up liquid or any soap that suits your skin.

What do you need to do?

- Take a breath in and blow out through the tubing, into the water to create bubbles. The breath out should be as long as possible. Aim to get the bubbles out of the top of the bottle each time - it may be messy and should be fun!
- Repeat ___ times. This is one cycle.
- After the cycle, huff (forced expiration technique) and cough to clear the phlegm, as taught by your physiotherapist.
- Try and cough the phlegm out rather than swallow it.
- Repeat this cycle (steps 1 - 3) ___times in total.



What to do after using Bubble Pep?

The tubing, bottle and tray should be washed out and left to dry or dried with a disposable towel and stored in a clean place until next used. You should throw the bottle and tubing away, replacing it with clean equipment once a week.

Useful tips and hints

- Ensure you blow and do not suck
- Don't take too many deep breaths - It might make you feel dizzy.
- For a change why not add food colouring to the water
- Alternatively, you can use Bubble Pep in the bath which will also aid humidification.
- Use soap that suits your skin in case of any eczema, etc.

Other formats

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Tel: 0300 131 4500

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

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The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Ashwinder Ellens, Alex Wheeler and Kirsten Mitchell – Senior Respiratory Physiotherapists

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