

How to use an Incentive Spirometer. For Patients with Sickle Cell Disease

This leaflet explains more about incentive spirometry. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor, nurse or physiotherapist caring for you.

What is an Incentive Spirometer?

An incentive spirometer is a device that is used to help encourage deep breathing. It aims to help you increase the amount of air that you breathe in and improve the way your breathing muscles work. It is a simple device we use to treat chest problems, or prevent chest problems becoming worse. It is especially important if you are not up and walking around as normal.

How does the Incentive Spirometer work?

Breathing in whilst using the incentive spirometer will move the 'counter' upwards. This will support you to take in a large controlled breath. This large controlled breath will allow air to get into all parts of your lungs and help prevent, or reverse, small pockets of lung from collapsing.

Areas of collapsed lung can increase the risk of acute chest syndrome which is a severe complication of sickle cell disease.

How do I use the Incentive Spirometer?

You will be shown how to assemble your Incentive Spirometer correctly.

- Sit upright in order to achieve the best deep breaths whilst using your incentive spirometer.
- Keep the incentive spirometer upright otherwise it will not work properly, aim to keep the base of the device at mid-chest level.
- Place the incentive spirometer mouthpiece in your mouth and seal your lips tightly around it to prevent air from leaking out of the device.
- Take a **slow, deep** breath **in through your mouth**.
- As you breathe in, you will notice the 'ball' or 'disk' rising on the device.
- Make sure that the yellow 'ball' or 'disk' stays on the smiley face or target line throughout the breath in.
- See if you can hold that deep breath and keep the 'ball' or 'disk' elevated for three seconds.
- Slowly breathe out.
- Repeat this sequence two or three times and then rest.
- If you are able to perform this with ease, increase the flow rate so that you find it harder to keep the ball elevated.

My plan for using the Incentive Spirometer

This table can be used to record the discussions you have with the physiotherapist about your goals for using the Incentive Spirometer.

• My Plan:	
Target volume (mls):	
Target flow rate:	
Number of breaths:	
Repetitions each session:	
Repetitions per day:	

How do I clean the Incentive Spirometer?

The mouth piece and tubing should be rinsed in warm, soapy water after each day and left to air dry. Do not place it in the dishwasher, boil it or bleach it.

Contact us

Whilst you are an inpatient if you have any questions about your incentive spirometer please do ask to speak to your physiotherapist.

Other contact details

Carol Rose (clinical nurse specialist) Tel: 07825 978812

Dr Julia Sikorska (sickle cell and thalassaemia consultant) Tel: 020 8725 0885

Dr Elizabeth Rhodes (sickle cell and thalassaemia consultant) Tel: 020 8725 0885

Sickle cell and thalassaemia secretary Tel: 020 8725 0885

Useful sources of information

Sickle Cell Society Tel: 020 8861 7795

Website: www.sicklecellsociety.org

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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