

Physiotherapy for Respiratory Conditions – Glossary (1st edition) Compiled by International Physiotherapy Group for Cystic Fibrosis



This glossary defines terms used in physiotherapy for respiratory conditions. Physiotherapy is defined as the physical management of problems or potential problems in patients with respiratory conditions, in order to obtain and maintain maximal function and to minimize disease progression.

Physiotherapy for respiratory conditions may include inhalation therapy, airway clearance techniques and physical therapy. The terms and expressions used in this glossary are those used in the IPG/CF booklet “Physiotherapy in the treatment of CF,” available online at www.cfww.org/IPG-CF/. Common physiological terms and expressions, defined in respiratory physiology books, are not included. New editions of the glossary will be presented as new terms and words are introduced and as the user groups increase. The glossary is available through the same IPG/CF web-site as mentioned above.

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Word/Term/Expression	Definition
Active Cycle of Breathing Techniques (ACBT)	An airway clearance technique. A cycle of the techniques of breathing control (BC), thoracic expansion exercises (TEE) and the forced expiration technique (FET).
Air flow	Expressed volume / time, (l/min)
Air flow velocity	Expressed distance / time, (m/min), speed
Airway Clearance Technique (ACT)	An airway clearance strategy (with or without a device) used to support mucus clearance by loosening, mobilizing, transporting and evacuating airway mucus.
Assisted Autogenic Drainage (AAD)	Autogenic Drainage (AD) carried out with assistance in infants, toddlers or individuals unable to follow instructions or to participate actively.
Autogenic Drainage (AD)	An airway clearance technique utilizing optimal expiratory flow rate at different lung volume levels.



Bi-level Positive Airway Pressure (BiPAP)	Assisted ventilation with independent settings for positive inspiratory and expiratory pressures.
Breathing Control (BC)	Normal tidal breathing encouraging use of the lower chest and relaxation of the upper chest and shoulders.
Chest clapping/percussion	Rhythmical percussion (tapping) of the chest wall using either the hand/s with a flexion / extension action of the wrist/s or a mechanical device.
Chest compression	Manual or mechanical compression of the chest in the direction of the normal expiratory movement of the ribs.
Chest mobility exercise(s)	Physical exercises to maintain or increase the mobility of the chest wall.
Chest physiotherapy	Historical ambiguous term used to define airway clearance therapy.
Chest shaking/vibrations	A shaking or vibration of the chest wall, in the direction of the normal movement of the ribs, during expiration.
Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP)	Assisted ventilation with the same positive pressure setting during the whole breathing cycle.
Cough technique	Using cough in a controlled way, at specific lung volumes, to check for and / or assist the removal of bronchial secretions.
Cough control	Being able to control the cough, to prevent unproductive paroxysms of coughing or coughing attacks.
Expiratory Resistance Breathing (ERB)	Breathing out against a resistance. Type and size of resistance chosen is dependent on physiological strategy, immediate aims and individual needs.
Forced Expiration Technique (FET)	Huffs/forced expirations interspersed with periods of breathing control (BC).
High Positive Expiratory Pressure (Hi-PEP)	An airway clearance technique combining PEP with forced expirations against the resistor.
Huff, huffing	A huff is a forced expirations with an open glottis.
Inhalation device	A device through which aerosolized or powdered drugs can be inhaled.
Inhalation therapy	Delivery of aerosolized or powdered drugs to the airways through inhalation.
Manual therapy	The treatment of joints and muscles by specific mobilization, manipulation and stretching.
Modified postural drainage	The adaptation of postural drainage, i.e to eliminate head-down positions.
Mucociliary clearance	The physiological movement of airway mucus by the mucociliary transport system, in a cephalad direction (towards the mouth).
Nebulizer	A device that aerosolizes a liquid.
Nebulizer system	Equipment comprising of an energy source and a nebulizer. These function as a unit.
Non-invasive ventilation (NIV)	Assisted ventilation applied non-invasively with a mask or mouthpiece for spontaneously breathing



	patients, with independent settings for inspiratory and expiratory pressures, flow rates and trigger levels.
Oscillating Positive Expiratory Pressure (OscPEP)	An airway clearance technique which utilizes the effects of oscillating positive expiratory pressure and oscillating flow, combined with cough. (OscPEP was originally developed using Destin/Scandipharm Flutter VRP1.)
Percussion	See “Chest clapping/percussion”.
Physical activity	Used to influence breathing pattern, ventilation and ventilation distribution. 1) Sports, physically active games, playing and activities of daily living (ADL), etc 2) Activating an infant or toddler physically by utilizing motor reflexes, current motor maturity and curiosity Target groups are children of all ages, adolescents and adults
Physical exercise	Targeted exercise(s) to preserve or improve a specific physical function.
Physical training	A prescribed programme of structured and repeated physical exercise to improve/maintain exercise capacity and endurance, mobility, muscle strength and posture.
Positioning	The use of positioning to utilize the effects of gravity, to change regional functional residual capacity (FRC) and to increase regional ventilation in order to <ul style="list-style-type: none">• improve aerosol deposition pattern• facilitate drainage of bronchial secretions• prevent / treat atelectasis
Positive Expiratory Pressure (PEP)	An airway clearance technique which utilizes the effects of tidal volume breathing towards an expiratory resistance, combined with FET or cough. (PEP was originally developed using AstraTech PEP-system.)
Postural Drainage (PD)	The use of gravity for drainage of secretions guided by bronchial anatomy.
Postural drainage & percussion (PD & P)	An airway clearance technique which combines postural drainage and chest clapping / percussion.
Pursed lips breathing	The generation of a positive pressure within the airways by expiration against partially closed lips.
Shaking	See “Chest shaking / vibrations”.
Thoracic expansion exercise (TEE)	Deep inspiration towards total lung capacity.
Vibrations	See “Chest shaking/vibrations”.