



Using a Hand held Fan

Information for patients

This information is to help you to learn how to manage your breathlessness. If you feel that your usual level of breathlessness has changed in any way, or has suddenly got worse please seek advice from your GP.

There have been research studies that show that using a hand held fan to create a cool draft of air can help to reduce the feeling of breathlessness. Standing fans, open windows, or using a cold flannel on your face may also help.

How to use the fan

Fans with 3 or more blades seem to have a better effect as they produce more moving air.

Use the fan in conjunction with the positions that you have been taught (see information sheet)

Hold six inches (15cms) from your face aiming the air so you feel the draught above your top lip and around the centre of your face. It may help to hold it at the side of your face so the air moves across your nose and mouth.

Keep the fan there for a few minutes.

You can use it as often as you need to help you control your breathlessness. You can also use it when you are moving around if you need a rest because of your breathlessness.

(Ref : Richard M. Schwartzstein, Karen Lahive, Alan Pope, Steven E. Weinberger, and J. Woodrow Weiss "Cold Facial Stimulation Reduces Breathlessness Induced in Normal Subjects", American Review of Respiratory Disease, Vol. 136, No. 1 (1987), pp. 58-61.)

Your physiotherapist will give you further advice on using this method effectively.