

# Using and looking after your Incentive Spirometer

## Information for patients

### Why do I have to use an incentive spirometer?

When you have surgery your lung volume can shrink, so by using an incentive spirometer you are helping to increase the volume of your lungs and reduce your risk of getting a chest infection.

### How do I use my incentive spirometer?

1. Sit on the edge of your bed if possible, or sit up as far as you can in bed.
2. Hold the incentive spirometer in an upright position.
3. Place the mouthpiece in your mouth and seal your lips tightly around it.
4. **Breathe in (inhale / suck in)** slowly. Notice the blue piston rising toward the top of the column. Try and make the piston touch the arrow which has been set by your physiotherapist.
5. Hold your breath as long as possible (at least for 2 seconds). Take the mouthpiece out of your mouth and breathe out (exhale / blow) slowly and allow the piston to fall to the bottom of the column.
6. **Rest for a few seconds** and repeat steps one to five at least 4 times every hour.
7. The position of the blue indicator on the left side of the spirometer shows your best effort. Use the indicator as a goal to work toward during each slow deep breath.
8. After each set of 5 deep breaths, cough to be sure your lungs are clear. If you have an incision, support your incision when coughing by placing a pillow firmly against it.
9. Once you are able to get out of bed safely, take frequent walks and practice coughing. You may stop using the incentive spirometer unless otherwise instructed by your healthcare provider.

### How do I clean my incentive spirometer?

1. Remove the tube from your incentive spirometer and place it in warm soapy water.
2. Remove from water and then leave to air dry.

If you have problems using your incentive spirometer or have any questions, please contact the Macmillan Colorectal ERAS Physiotherapist on 01606 544513.

This information is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please telephone 01606 544513.