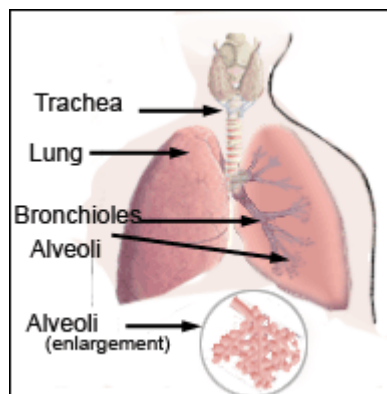


WHAT IS RESPIRATORY CARE?

- Respiratory Therapists (RT's) are healthcare professionals who are trained in respiratory care.
- Respiratory care is a life-supporting, life-enhancing health care practice promoting optimal cardiorespiratory function.
- Respiratory care uses scientific principles to identify and manage acute or chronic dysfunction of the cardiorespiratory system.
- Respiratory care includes prevention, assessment, treatment, management, education and ongoing care.



HOW DOES ALS AFFECT MY BREATHING?

- When you take a breath in you use your diaphragm and rib muscles. This breathing, which moves air in and out of the lungs, is called VENTILATION.
- Oxygen is taken up into the blood and carbon dioxide is eliminated. This gas exchange that occurs in the lungs is called RESPIRATION.
- When the diaphragm and rib muscles become weak air exchange is effected and carbon dioxide builds up in the blood and oxygen levels fall.
- This causes shortness of breath, decreased ability to cough, difficulties lying flat and eventually respiratory failure.
- This process is (usually) gradual and worsens over time and the respiratory therapist can monitor this process and provide ongoing care.
- Developing a good relationship with the respiratory therapist allows you to participate in your care and make informed decisions.

DO I NEED A RESPIRATORY THERAPIST?

Whether you are experiencing breathing problems or not it is a good idea to get to know the respiratory therapist who will:

- Evaluate breathing function by conducting a simple breathing test known as a spirometry.
- Provide airway and breathing support by teaching you simple exercises and/or arranging specialized equipment.
- Answer questions concerning breathing and respiratory equipment (including biPAP, suction machines, tracheotomies and ventilators).
- Help suggest strategies to minimize common respiratory illness such as bronchitis, pneumonia and aspiration.

Our Respiratory Therapist is:
Jodee Naylor, RRT
905 521 2100 extension 73731

A Gentle Reminder:

Arranging assessments and ordering devices is a lengthy process and so we highly recommend an appointment with the respiratory therapist soon after diagnosis.

STRATEGIES

Cough assist: is a method of increasing the forcefulness of a cough. This can be done manually or with a machine known as the inxsufflator

Breath stacking: also known as “volume augmentation” is a method used to periodically increase the amount of air in the lungs in an effort to maintain healthy lung function as long as possible.

Suction machine: a device similar to the one at your dentist’s office which helps remove excess mucous and saliva from your mouth.

NIPPV: Noninvasive Positive Pressure Ventilation: involves the use of a face mask or nasal mask with a small breathing machine (BiPAP). The advantage of NIPPV is that you have the opportunity to try this type of assisted breathing without committing to a more permanent option (e.g. tracheostomy).

Ventilator: is a machine capable of doing a person’s breathing for them which can be used with a mask or mouthpiece or through a tracheostomy.

Tracheostomy: is a surgical opening into the trachea. This opening can be used to remove secretions (suction machine) and/or connect to a ventilator to assist breathing.



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RESPIRATORY CARE SERVICES