

## What to do when breathless

Use the breathing control exercise in one of the positions shown. Getting in a good position helps the upper chest relax and encourages you to use the lower chest for breathing.

Breathe at the rate which feels most comfortable – quickly if necessary, but gently. Try not to use the already over-worked upper chest.

Your rate of breathing will slow down as you regain control of your breaths.

### Good positions to use

- High side lying
- Sitting at a table
- Sitting leaning forward



- Sitting back
- Standing leaning forward
- Standing leaning back

Practice breathing control for a short time every day. It will help you breathe naturally should you get an attack of breathlessness.

### High side lying

Lie on your side, rolled slightly forward with a slope of 4-5 pillows to raise your shoulders. Use an extra pillow to fill the gap between your waist and armpit to stop you sliding down the bed.

The top pillow should be above your shoulder, supporting your head and neck only.

Your lower forearm can be placed either under the head pillow, or rest it on the bed under the pillow at your waist.

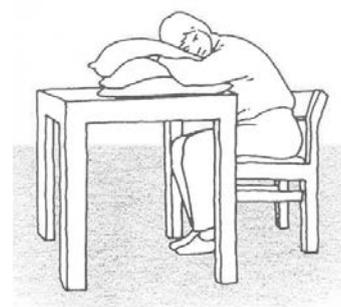
Your knees should be slightly bent, with the top leg in front of the one underneath.

Traditional pillows are more comfortable than shaped pillows or special backrests.



### Sitting at a table

Sit leaning forward from the hips, with your upper chest and head supported on pillows or cushions.



### Sitting leaning forward

Sit leaning forward with your arms resting on your thighs and with your wrists and hands relaxed.



### Sitting back

You may prefer sitting back in a chair with your arms relaxed and resting on your thighs, with the palms of your hands facing upwards.

### Standing leaning forward

Stand leaning forward from the hips, with your upper chest and head supported on pillows or cushions.



### Standing leaning back

Stand, leaning back against a wall, with your feet placed slightly apart, and about 30cm (12") out from the wall. Your shoulders should be relaxed, with your arms hanging loosely by your sides.



### Breathing control when walking

This is helpful when you are walking up stairs and slopes, and may even be useful when walking on the level.

Try to relax the upper chest, shoulders and arms, and use the breathing control exercise.

Under strain, there is often a tendency to hold your breath. This only makes things worse and increases the feeling of breathlessness.

Try to breathe in time to the steps you take. For example:

- Breathe **in** for 1 step
- Breathe **out** for 1 step

**or**

- Breathe **in** for 1 step
- Breathe **out** for 2 steps

Find the rhythm which suits you best.



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