

INSPIRING WELLNESS

Keeping Your Lungs Healthy When You Have A Neuromuscular Disease

Handling Colds

During a cold, a weak cough can become weaker and it is more difficult to clear mucus from the lungs. People with a muscular dystrophy have normal lungs, so if the oxygen saturation is going down, it means more help is needed to cough and breathe (NOT just extra oxygen is needed). The following steps are very helpful in keeping the lungs clear and keeping oxygen saturations above 94%.

1. At least every 4 hours:

Cough Assist: 5 sets of 5 breaths, ending on inspiration.



Airway Clearance (Chest PT or Vest Therapy) for 10-20 minutes.



Cough Assist: 5 sets of 5 breaths, ending on inspiration.

2. Use the Cough Assist whenever you hear or feel a rattle in the chest. Suction the mouth when mucus is stuck in the back of throat.
3. If you have them at home, use BIPAP or the ventilator with all sleep (i.e., naps and overnight). With colds, we all are weaker.
4. Use the oximeter, once a day when well and at least 3 times a day when sick. If the oxygen saturation is less than 94%, use the Cough Assist to clear secretions and then recheck the oxygen saturation. If the oxygen saturation is 92% or less or the Cough Assist is not increasing the oxygen saturation to above 94%, please call us.

Monday through Friday from 9-4: 878-7524.

Other times: 878-7000 and ask to speak with the Lung Center physician on-call.

