
How to Use Incentive Spirometer

What is an incentive spirometer?

An incentive spirometer is a device that measures how deeply you can inhale (breathe in). It helps you take slow, deep breaths to expand and fill your lungs with air.

Why do you need to use an incentive spirometer?

An incentive spirometer is most commonly used after surgery. This handy device helps open your lungs and keep your lungs clear.

Different parts of the incentive spirometer

The incentive spirometer is made up of a breathing tube, an air chamber and an indicator. The breathing tube is connected to the air chamber and has a mouthpiece at the end. The indicator is found inside the device, and can be easily located by finding the numbers on the column.

How do I use an incentive spirometer?

Sit up as straight as possible. Do not bend your head forward or backward. Hold the incentive spirometer in an upright position. Place the target pointer to the level that you need to reach. Exhale (breathe out) normally and then do the following:

1. Put the mouthpiece in your mouth and close your lips tightly around it. Do not block the mouthpiece with your tongue.
2. Breathe in slowly and deeply as possible through the mouthpiece to raise the indicator. Try to make the indicator rise up to the level of the goal marker.
3. When you cannot inhale any longer, remove the mouthpiece and hold your breath for at least 3 seconds. Exhale normally.
4. Rest for a few seconds and then repeat these steps 10 to 12 times every hour when you are awake, or as often as directed.
5. After each set of 10 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.

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If you have problems or questions, contact your physician's office.

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