

Incentive Spirometer – Correct Use

This device measures how deeply you can inhale (breathe in). It helps you take slow, deep breaths to expand and fill your lungs with air. This helps prevent lung problems such as pneumonia.

Sit up straight. Hold the incentive spirometer or set it on a flat surface.

- Place its mouthpiece in your mouth.
- Make a good seal over the mouthpiece with your lips.
- Breathe out (exhale) normally.
- Breathe in (inhale) **slowly**.



As you breathe in, watch the small object inside the spirometer. It may look like a ball or disc.

- Your goal is to make the object float **in the middle** of the chamber while you breathe in. (There may be a guide on the side of the air chamber with words like Good – Better – Best.)
- If you breathe in **too fast**, the object will shoot to the top.
- If you breathe in **too slowly**, the object will stay at the bottom.

Hold your breath for 3 to 5 seconds. Then, slowly exhale.

Your doctor may set a goal marker on the side of the spirometer. It will show how big a breath to take. Take 10 to 15 breaths with your spirometer:

_____ Every 1 to 2 hours – or –

_____ As often as you are told to by _____ (RN or MD)

If you have questions or problems, call the number below.

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays, Pulmonary Clinic

(608) 775-2478 or (800) 362-9567, ext. 52478

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This information is meant to inform and educate our patients. It supports the care you receive from your health care team. It does not replace medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment. Talk to your doctor or health care team before starting any new treatment.

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