

Chest Physiotherapy

Do you suffer from shortness of breath, have difficulty clearing sputum or have a limited tolerance for activity or exercise...?

We have Chartered Physiotherapists that are specifically trained in treatments and techniques that can help with problems associated with heart and lung conditions such as asthma, bronchiectasis, pulmonary fibrosis, lung cancer, recurrent chest infections, cystic fibrosis, COPD, emphysema, bronchitis and heart/lung surgery. Outpatients can attend for chest physiotherapy and advice without a GP or consultant referral.

Ireland is now ranked among the top four countries in the world with the highest prevalence rates for Asthma and COPD. 1 in 7 children and 1 in 10 adults suffer from asthma with 60% of these not having their symptoms under control. These conditions cannot be cured but they can be managed effectively and successfully with medication and chest physiotherapy. Jane Cox, our Senior Respiratory Physiotherapist leads our respiratory physiotherapy service in the Bon Secours Hospital, which treat many self referred outpatients.

The physiotherapist will firstly perform a full chest assessment to ascertain your individual problems to enable them to devise a specialised treatment plan, which may incorporate any or all of the following:

- Breathing exercises - techniques to reduce shortness of breath and aid clearance of mucus/phlegm e.g. active cycle of breathing technique, autogenic drainage and positive expiratory pressure devices e.g. flutter/acapella.
- Manual techniques - percussion and vibrations to loosen mucus/phlegm.
- Advice on positioning to allow gravity to assist the drainage of mucus/phlegm.
- Advice on the use of inhalers, nebulisers and volumatics.
- Exercise programmes/Pulmonary Rehabilitation - to help improve fitness by increasing blood oxygen levels. You may also be given advice on how best to manage your condition while participating in sport.
- Advice on bone health for those who are inactive as a result of their breathing difficulties or for those using oral steroid.
- Advice on thoracic mobility and posture - an important part in prevention of long term back problems in patients with breathing difficulties.

We also offer **Pulmonary Rehabilitation*** which is a multidisciplinary programme of care for patients with any of the conditions listed or for those patients who have become deconditioned and need to start exercising again. The programme provides rehabilitation covering physical exercise, disease education, diet and nutrition advice and behavioural techniques which are tailored to the individual's needs and circumstances to help increase respiratory function, strength and conditioning. Many patients with COPD start to avoid exercise due to their breathlessness and this course is the best way of starting to exercise again in a supervised environment. Individual exercise sessions can also be arranged if the class times are not suitable.

* for Pulmonary rehabilitation a GP or consultant referral is needed

If appropriate, your Chartered Physiotherapist will liaise with your doctor, hospital consultant or other health care professional.

The aim of the Chartered Physiotherapist is to help you to manage your heart/lung condition to the best of your ability within your lifestyle.