

How to Use an Incentive Spirometer

Using your incentive spirometer after surgery will help you keep your lungs clear and will help keep your lungs active throughout the recovery process, as if you were performing your daily activities.

How to use the incentive spirometer

1. Sit on the edge of your bed if possible, or sit up as far as you can in bed.
2. Hold the incentive spirometer in an upright position.
3. Place the mouthpiece in your mouth and seal your lips tightly around it.
4. Breathe in slowly and as deeply as possible. Notice the yellow piston rising toward the top of the column. The yellow indicator should reach the blue outlined area.
5. Hold your breath as long as possible. Then exhale slowly and allow the piston to fall to the bottom of the column.
6. Rest for a few seconds and repeat steps one to five at least 10 times every hour.
7. Position the yellow indicator on the left side of the spirometer to show your best effort. Use the indicator as a goal to work toward during each slow deep breath.
8. 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.
9. Once you are able to get out of bed safely, take frequent walks and practice the cough.

