

Managing Colds with Duchenne

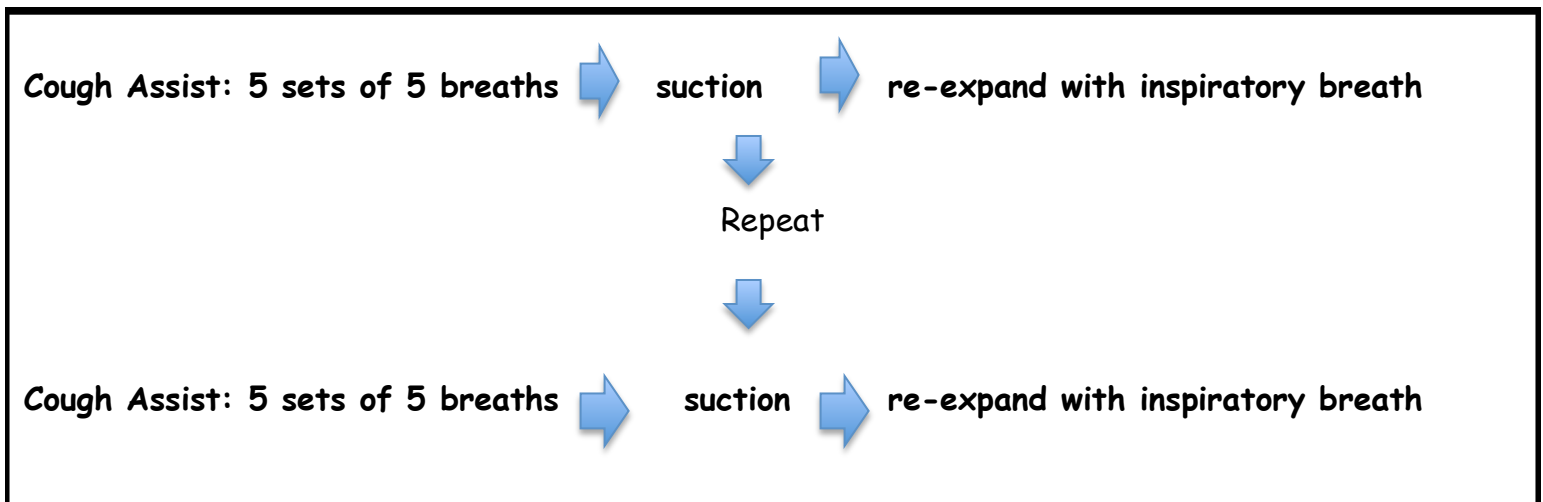
Keeping Your Lungs Healthy When You Have Breathing Muscle Weakness

Handling Colds

During a cold, a weak cough can become weaker, making it more difficult to clear mucus from your lungs. People with a muscular dystrophy have normal lungs. **If your oxygen saturation is going down, it means you need to cough to clear the mucous so that you can breathe more easily.** Giving oxygen will not help raise your oxygen saturation.

An oxygen saturation of 96% is normal; an oxygen saturation level of 95% indicates that your lungs are retaining carbon dioxide; an oxygen saturation level of 94% indicates further carbon dioxide retention. The following steps are very helpful in keeping your lungs clear and keeping oxygen saturations normal (above 96%).

1. At least every 4 hours:



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 96%**, use the Cough Assist to clear secretions and then recheck the oxygen saturation. **If the oxygen saturation remains at 96% or less, the Cough Assist is not helping to increase the oxygen saturation, Please call your primary care provider, pulmonologist or seek medical attention.**