# CORONAVIRUS SYMPTOMS: WAYS TO MANAGE BREATHLESSNESS AT HOME

Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland

For some people, coronavirus can make them feel breathless. The following advice can help you manage breathlessness from coronavirus.

For how to manage breathlessness if you have a long-term health condition, see our Essential Guide on Breathlessness available from **www.chss.org.uk/publications**.
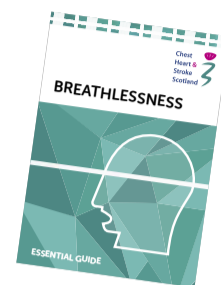
BREATHING TECHNIQUES

Breathing techniques involve gentle breathing through your diaphragm (your main breathing muscle). They can help you to control your breathing and help you to relax. Staying relaxed is also important because breathlessness can make you feel anxious and if you feel anxious, you may start to breathe faster.
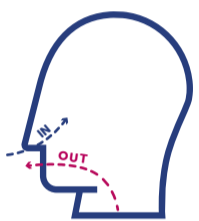
Pursed-lips breathing

- Close your mouth.
- Breathe in through your nose for several seconds.
- Slowly breathe out through your mouth for 4 to 6 seconds with your lips pursed like you are whistling.

Drop your shoulders

- Relax and drop your shoulders down so they are not 'hunched'.

This technique is helpful, especially if you feel anxious.

BODY POSITIONS TO HELP BREATHING

Sitting upright

- Sit upright with your back against the back of a chair.
- Relax your hands and wrists.

Sitting and leaning forward

- Sit down and lean forward.
- Rest both arms on your knees or on the back of a chair in front of you.

OTHER WAYS TO MANAGE BREATHLESSNESS

Relaxation exercises can help to help to slow down your breathing and prevent you from becoming anxious if you feel breathless. Search for 'breathing and relaxation' on **www.nhsinform.scot** for hints and tips, including a simple audio guide.

Keep the room cool especially if it is hot outside as hot and humid weather can make breathlessness worse.

Open a window or door to help air move around the room (don't use a fan as this can spread infection).

If your symptoms get worse or do not get better after 7 days, call 111.
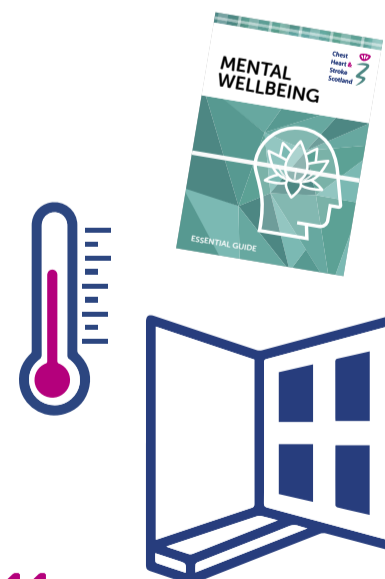
For free, confidential information and support on your condition and how coronavirus might affect you, call our Advice Line nurses on **0808 801 0899**, email **adviceline@chss.org.uk** or text NURSE to **66777**.