

ICOUGH Video Transcript

The ICOUGH program incorporates multiple interventions that have been shown to decrease postoperative pneumonia. ICOUGH stands for:

I- Incentive Spirometer Exercises

C- Cough and Breathe Deeply

O- Oral Care

U- Understand ICOUGH Practices

G- Get Out of Bed and Walk the Hallway

H- Head of Bed Elevation

Deep breathing exercises will help keep your lungs healthy. Place your mouth on the mouthpiece and seal your lips around it. Breathe in (inhale) slowly and deeply. Remove your mouth from the mouthpiece and breathe out (exhale). Do this 10 times each hour while you are awake.

Taking deep breaths and coughing will help to clear your lungs. Using a pillow, gently brace (splint) your abdomen. Take a deep breath, then cough strongly every two hours while awake. Take deep breaths often.

Brushing your teeth twice a day aids in good oral hygiene. Using mouthwash twice daily will help keep your mouth clean from germs. You should brush your teeth and use mouthwash several days before your surgery. You should continue to brush your teeth and use mouthwash after you are discharged from the hospital.

It's important for you and your family to take an active part in your recovery from surgery. Please ask questions if there is anything that is confusing, or you do not understand. We want your pain to be well managed. Well-managed pain will allow you to take deep breaths, cough, do your breathing exercises, and get out of bed to sit in a chair or walk the hallways. Ask for pain medication as needed.

Getting out of bed and walking at least three times per day will help your recovery after surgery and help prevent complications. Walking will help clear your secretions from your lungs and improve your circulation so that you may regain your strength. It is important to get out of bed with assistance as needed.

It is important to keep the head of your bed elevated 30-45 degrees. Being in an upright position after surgery will help your breathing.

The key to a successful postoperative course is ensuring that your pain is well managed. This will allow you to participate in the ICOUGH interventions. Discuss with your care team if your pain is not acceptable. We look forward to caring for you. How well you do is up to you.