



## Relaxation

### **Breathlessness Advice and Support**

Breathlessness Advice and Support is for those who:

- Experience breathlessness at rest and/or during activity
- Live with/support someone who suffers from breathlessness

### **Introduction**

Breathing problems are very common in people who have heart and lung conditions, cancer and neurological conditions. Breathlessness can be disabling and frightening.

Being breathless can affect your ability to relax. The aim of this information sheet is to help you to manage your breathlessness through relaxation

1. Find a comfortable position either in sitting or lying. Loosen any tight clothing and remove your shoes if you wish. Close your eyes
2. Become aware of your breathing - breathe in and out normally
3. Squeeze your toes up as tight as you can, hold the tension then slowly release
4. Lock your knees, pulling them back down, hold that tension then slowly release. Feel the difference. Repeat
5. Make a fist with each hand. Hold on tight, then slowly let your fingers uncurl, and your palms release. Take a moment to feel the difference. Repeat
6. Hunch your shoulders, feeling the pull up your back. Hold this position and then slowly release the tension. Let your shoulders fall. Repeat
7. Press your head back into the chair. Release the tension
8. Clench your jaw. Feel your teeth squeeze together. Slowly release your jaw, allow a space between your teeth and allow your tongue to rest between your teeth
9. Screw your eyes and frown. Feel all the muscles working hard. Slowly relax your face, try to feel the tension release as the muscles relax. Repeat
10. Take your attention to each part of your body, checking for any remaining muscle tension. Recognise the areas that are easiest to relax, and those which are most difficult
11. Sense the feeling of relaxation, and allow yourself a moment of calm
12. When you feel ready, become aware of the room, stretch and open your eyes

## **Additional Support**

Easy Breathing Support Group, St Elizabeth Hospice (Ipswich)

Relaxation Classes, St Elizabeth Hospice (Ipswich)

SKILLS Group, St Elizabeth Hospice (Great Yarmouth and Waveney)

Positive Living, St Elizabeth Hospice (Ipswich)

### **For further information**

This information sheet is intended as a guide. You can speak to a member of the medical, nursing or therapy team at St Elizabeth Hospice if you would like to discuss any specific issues you have relating to you.