

## Osteopathic Home Exercises for Lung Infections

- **Day One: Begin with all exercises spaced three times during the day**
- **Subsequent days: Two to three times per day, as tolerated**
- **Limit treatments of the seriously ill to less than ten minutes**
- **Expect the patient to feel worse after the first day due to activation of the immune system. They should start feeling better after some good rest.**

### **Thoracic Inlet Release** (Lymphatic Technique)

**Purpose:** Open up the path to drain the lymphatic system (part of the immune system)

**Instructions:**

1. Caregiver sits next to the patient, who is on their back (Images 1-3)
2. The patient's arm is bent at the elbow and away from the body at a 90° angle (Images 1-3)
3. Caregiver supports the patient's elbow on their thigh, or the bed, and supports the patient's wrist and hand with their hand that is furthest from the patient (Images 1-3)
4. Using the hand closest to the patient, place finger pads into the space above the collar bone, (fingers slipping down toward the patient's feet, immediately behind the collar bone)
5. Begin with the patient's arm in internal rotation (Image 1)
6. Caregiver maintains tension with finger pads on the tissues (respecting tissue tensions and patient comfort.) As tension develops while the patient's arm is rotated into external rotation (Images 2-3)
7. Hold this position for several seconds until some relaxation of the tissues are noted
8. Slowly move the patient's arm back into internal rotation (Image 1)
9. Gently advance finger pads into the soft tissues behind the collar bone as the tissues relax
10. Repeat this several times
11. Treat both sides of the body



### **Rib Raising** (Sympathetic Nervous System, Ribs Motion and Lymphatic Technique)

**Purpose:** Help loosen thick mucus, open the lungs, keep the ribs moving, and stimulate the nerves to the lungs

**Instructions:**

1. The patient lies on their back or sits with their arms resting on the shoulder of the caregiver (Images 4-5)
2. The caregiver slides both hands under the patient's ribs (or wraps their arms around the patient) (Images 4-5) and curls their fingers (Image 6)
3. The pads of the fingers lie on the tissues over the ribs, just to the side of the center of the spine, on the side near the caregiver (Image 7)
4. While leaning down with the elbows, the caregiver's fingers lift into the patient's skin and muscles (modify for seated - Image 5)
5. The finger pressure lifts the spine a little bit off the table and places a stretch on the muscles and skin to the side of the spine
6. This technique may be performed as an alternating kneading technique or with continued deep pressure
7. Hold until there is a feeling of softening of the tissues and a change in the patient's breathing (relaxing)
8. Continue for 30-60 seconds, then work your way up and down the entire rib cage
9. Repeat on both sides of the body when the patient is lying down, or treat both sides at the same time if the patient is seated



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### **Pectoral Traction** (Lymphatic Technique)

**Purpose:** Assist moving lymph through the body. This helps move immune cells to fight infections.

**Instructions:**

1. Caregiver stands or sits at the head of the bed
2. Have the patient lie on their back and spread their arms a little away from their body to allow greater access to the armpits
3. Grasp the front part of the armpit region (deep under the pectoralis major and minor muscles) using the finger pads of the fingers of each hand
4. Use a sensitive approach so that it is less painful
5. The caregiver holds on and leans backwards, as the patient takes a deep breath in, to stretch the muscles and deep underlying tissues in the armpits
6. Maintain this traction and resist the pull of the tissues as the patient lets their air out
7. Perform the technique through several breathing cycles until the tissues under the skin feels softer/relaxes



### **Lymphatic Pump** (Lymphatic Technique)

**Purpose:** Assist moving lymph through the body and deliver it to the lymphatic duct behind the collar bones. This helps move immune cells to fight infections.

**Instructions:**

1. Caregiver stands behind the patient, who is on their back with their head turned to the side so that they do not cough on the caregiver (Image 9)
2. Caregiver places hands on the upper chest, just below the collar bones (Image 10)
3. Pressure from the palms of the hands is in a combined direction toward the patient's back and feet
4. Caregiver creates a rhythmic pumping action of about 2 times/second and with enough force to create a gentle rocking motion through the entire body. (The motion may be done by moving your whole body as you rock on your feet)
5. The patient continues to breathe normally during the treatment
6. The technique should be performed for about 2-3 minutes



### **Suboccipital Release** (Parasympathetic Nervous System Technique)

**Purpose:** Relax the muscles at the top of the neck. Allow key nerves (Vagus nerves) from the brain to lungs, heart and other organs to function better. This may also be helpful for headaches and upper neck tightness.

**Instructions:**

1. Patient lies on their back
2. Caregiver places their fingertips just under the bottom of the head, at the top of the neck (these muscles may be very tight and tender) (Image 11)
3. Balance the patient's head on the caregiver's finger pads, with the back of the head resting off of the palms
4. Let the fingers slowly sink deeper into the muscles at the bottom of the head
5. Hold this position until the muscles begin to relax and the weight of the head drops into the palm of the caregiver's hands



### **Medical Disclaimer:**

- The Osteopathic Manipulation Treatment (OMT) techniques taught in these pages are medical treatments. They are designed to be used by physicians. Non-medically trained individuals should ONLY use them under the guidance and instruction of a physician or medical provider. Stop the techniques if the patient experiences worsening breathing or if either the caregiver or patient experience pain.
- This handout has been made available in hopes that the information will help patients fight respiratory infections when a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO), Medical Doctor (MD), or other medically trained personnel are not available to provide hands-on medical care. When there is not a respiratory epidemic or pandemic, these techniques should not be used without explicit medical advice.