

Chest physiotherapy (CPT) for children

What is chest physiotherapy (CPT)?

Chest physiotherapy (CPT) is a treatment to loosen mucus and thick fluids in the lungs. It uses gravity and vibration to help move mucus out of the lungs and cause coughing. In the hospital, a nurse or respiratory therapist will clap on your child's chest with a cupped hand. This will not hurt your child.

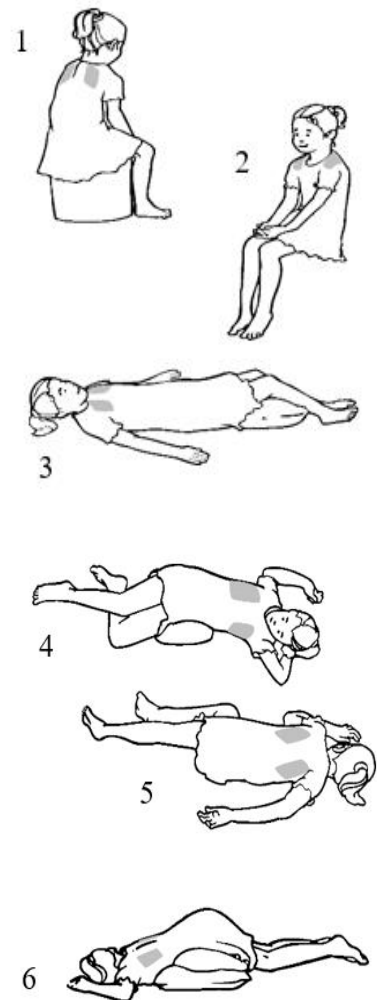
How do I do CPT?

Your child's nurse or respiratory therapist can teach you how to do CPT:

- If your child has reflux or gets tube feedings, ask the doctor about how to position your child for CPT before you start.
- Do CPT several times each day as advised by your child's doctor.
- Have your child sit on your lap or lie in several positions on a bed.
- Use pillows to help keep them comfortable.

Steps to do CPT:

1. With your child sitting up, clap with cupped hands on both sides of the upper part of their back. Do not clap on their spine.
2. Clap with cupped hands above the collarbone, between each shoulder and the neck. Do not clap on their breastbone.
3. Have your child lie flat on their back with no pillow under their head. Put pillows under their knees to make them more comfortable. Clap with cupped hands between the nipple and the collarbone on both sides of their chest.
4. Have your child lie on their side with their head slanted down. Use pillows under their hips to get the right angle. Clap with cupped hands over each nipple. For young girls who are developing breasts, clap below the breast tissue. Clap on both sides under the armpits. Clap with cupped hands on both sides of the middle back.
5. Turn your child to their other side, keeping their body at the same angle. Clap with cupped hands over each nipple. Clap on both sides under the armpits. Clap with cupped hands on both sides of the middle back.
6. Have your child lie on their stomach. Put pillows under their waist to slant their torso. Clap with cupped hands on both sides of their lower middle back.



In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Chest physiotherapy (CPT) for children, continued

What else do I need to know?

- Wait at least 1 hour after meals or feedings to do CPT. This helps prevent vomiting (throwing up).
- CPT should not hurt.
- During CPT, clap with cupped hands on the rib cage. Do not clap below the rib cage or on the breastbone or spine.
- Cover your child's skin during CPT. Have them wear pajamas, a hospital gown or light clothing.
- Coughing helps clear the lungs of mucus. Have your child cough with each position change.
- Stop CPT, and call the doctor **right away** if your child coughs up any mucus with blood in it.
- The head-down position may not be done in children with reflux. Check with your child's doctor.
- Give aerosol (breathing) treatments before CPT to help your child clear the mucus.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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