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Effective Coughing

Patient name: _____

Admission: _____

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- I. **The client/caregiver can list benefits of controlled, effective coughing.**
 - A. To conserve energy and decrease fatigue
 - B. To remove mucus from airways
 - C. To prevent respiratory complications

- II. **The client/caregiver can demonstrate positioning methods for effective coughing.**
 - A. Sit upright on chair or edge of bed with feet firmly on the floor, leaning forward slightly.
 - B. If unable to sit upright, elevate head of bed and flex knees, or lie on the side keeping upper body flexed forward and knees bent toward body.

- III. **The client/caregiver can demonstrate controlled coughing.**
 - A. Take a deep breath, placing your hands on your stomach while allowing stomach to expand.
 - B. Hold breath for 2 seconds.
 - C. Cough twice with mouth open. The first cough loosens mucus and the second cough helps to remove it.
 - D. Cough the mucus into a tissue and dispose of it.
 - E. Breathe in slowly through nose. Fast mouth breathing can drive mucus back into lungs.

- IV. **The client/caregiver can demonstrate cascade coughing, another version of controlled coughing.**
 - A. Take a slow deep breath and contract abdominal muscles.

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- B. Hold breath for 2 seconds.
- C. Open mouth and perform a series of coughs from the beginning to the end of the expiration. This clears large and small airways.
- D. Then breathe slowly through the nose and rest.

- V. **The client/caregiver can list other general measures to promote effective coughing and clearing of airways.**
 - A. Take pain medication as needed.
 - B. Support incision with a pillow to decrease pain when coughing.
 - C. Increase fluids to 2000 ml per day, unless contraindicated, to thin mucus.
 - D. Use medications as ordered.

- VI. **The client/caregiver can list possible complications of ineffective coughing.**
 - A. Collapse of airways
 - B. Rupture of alveoli
 - C. Pneumothorax

REFERENCES

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