
Only do quad coughs as advised by your child's doctor.

What is a quad cough?

A quad cough is a procedure to help your child clear secretions (such as mucus). A quad cough helps if your child has a weak or absent cough.

To have a normal cough that works well, your child must use their abdominal (belly) muscles. Your child's abdominal muscles may not work well due to muscle weakness or paralysis.

A quad cough is when you give a forceful push on a certain part of your child's belly. You do this at the same time your child tries to cough. This helps to:

- Push the diaphragm up and in. (The diaphragm is a muscle that helps your child breathe.)
- Push up secretions.

Are quad coughs right for my child?

Talk with your child's doctor before you do a quad cough. Ask if quad coughs are right for your child.

Do not do a quad cough if your child:

- Has a chest injury (such as broken ribs).
- Is pregnant.
- Has abnormal belly organs.

Why does my child need to do quad coughs?

If your child does not clear secretions, they can settle in the lungs. This can lead to pneumonia and trouble breathing.

What are the risks of doing quad coughs?

If quad coughs are not done correctly, it could cause damage to the ribs and abdominal organs. Only do quad coughs when ordered by your child's doctor and when taught how to do so.

When does my child need to do quad coughs?

Your child will need a doctor's order to do quad coughs while they are in the hospital. Your child needs quad coughs if:

- You can hear or feel congestion in their chest.
- They try to cough.
- They are short of breath.
- They tell you they need it.

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

Quad cough, continued

What are the steps?

1. Make sure that your child is in a safe position. Your child may lie down or sit up for quad coughs. If your child sits in a chair, it should be locked and stable.



2. Spread your fingers out, and place your thumbs together. Your hands should look like a butterfly.

3. Place your hands (in the butterfly position) **under** your child's ribcage. The heel of your hands should be halfway between the bottom of the sternum (breastbone) and the belly button.



4. Use the heel of your hand to put pressure on your child's belly.

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Quad cough, continued

5. Ask your child to take a few deep breaths. On the last deep breath, ask your child to cough as they breathe out.
 - In one smooth motion, push (thrust) your hand in and up, towards the diaphragm. Use just enough force to cause your child's cough to sound like a normal cough.
 - You must do this at just the right time when your child coughs. This is to make sure that his cough works well.
 - If it is too hard to time it just right, ask your child to take a deep breath in and hold it. Then, you can do the hand thrust.
6. You may repeat if needed. Your child may need to rest in between thrusts.
7. Use tissues or oral suction to help remove secretions from your child's mouth.

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.