**Breathing Pattern Disorders (BPD)**

**Introduction**
Breathing is a normal spontaneous vital function which is regular, quiet and effortless and reflects the way that the respiratory system functions. Breathing pattern disorders or dysfunctional breathing, historically known as hyperventilation syndrome, are chronic abnormal respiratory patterns in relation to the efficiency of breathing, often resulting in dyspnoea and other non-respiratory symptoms (Clifton-Smith and Rowley, 2011).

“around 10% of the population worldwide are diagnosed with hyperventilation- far more have a subtle, yet clinically significant, breathing pattern disorder”

**Dysfunctional Breathing**
- Irregular pattern
- Mouth breathing
- Audible, noisy
- Increased RR 20+
- Predominantly upper chest movement
- Use of accessory muscles

**Efficient Breathing**
- Diaphragm flattens on inspiration and abdomen distends
- Passive expiration
- Minimal upper chest movement
- Quiet, energy efficient
- RR 10-14 bpm

**Common Symptoms**
- Anxiety
- Fatigue
- Frequent sigh or yawn
- Gasp for air during speech
- Breathing is unnatural or effortful
- Breath-holding
- Headaches
- Palpations

**Physiotherapy Intervention**
(BTS/ACPRC Guidelines 2009, BTS Guidelines 2014)
- Education of symptoms and cause
- Restoration of relaxed, rhythmical nose-breathing pattern
- Posture correction
- Breathing with movement and activity
- Breathing with talking
- Education of stress and tension in body
- Breathing through an acute episode

**References**