

KATHLEEN KILGOUR CENTRE

Leading Radiation Therapy

Active Breathing Coordinator

(ABC)

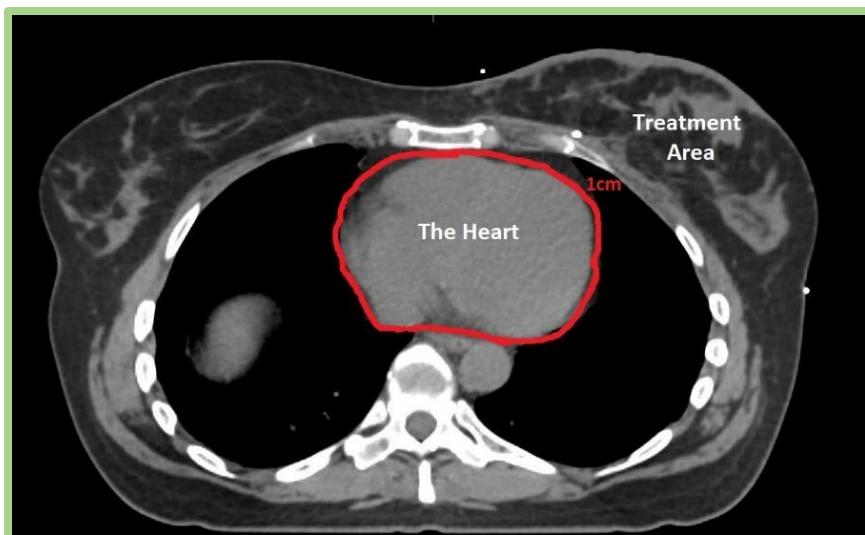
Information

What is the Active Breathing Coordinator (ABC)?

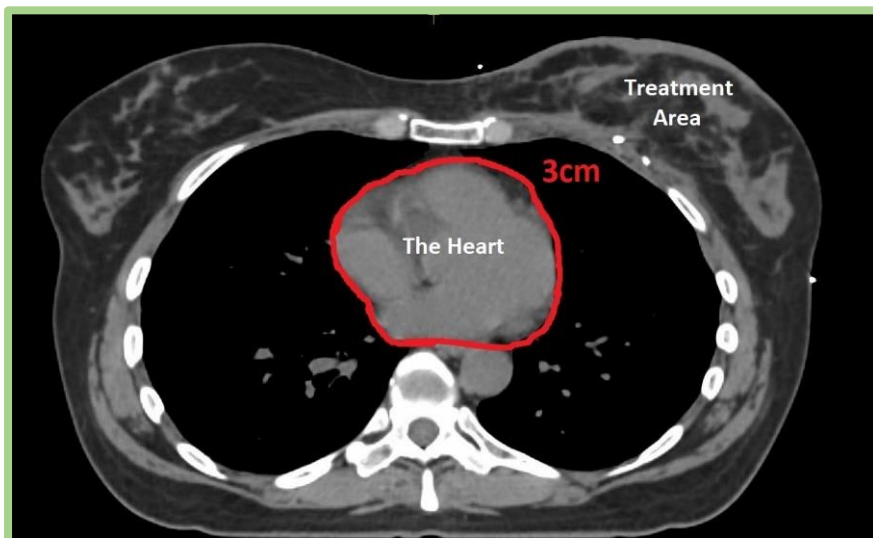
Your breathing can have an effect on the position of organs in your body. The Active Breathing Coordinator is a device that helps you to hold your breath, which leads to a reduction of the movement of these organs.

Why do I need to use it for treatment?

When treating the left breast, your heart is in very close proximity to the treatment area. Below you can see there is a 1cm gap between the heart and the treatment area.



When you breathe in, the distance between the heart and the treatment area can increase significantly. This reduces the amount of radiation that the heart receives. Below you can see that there is now a 3cm gap between the heart and treatment area.



How does it work?

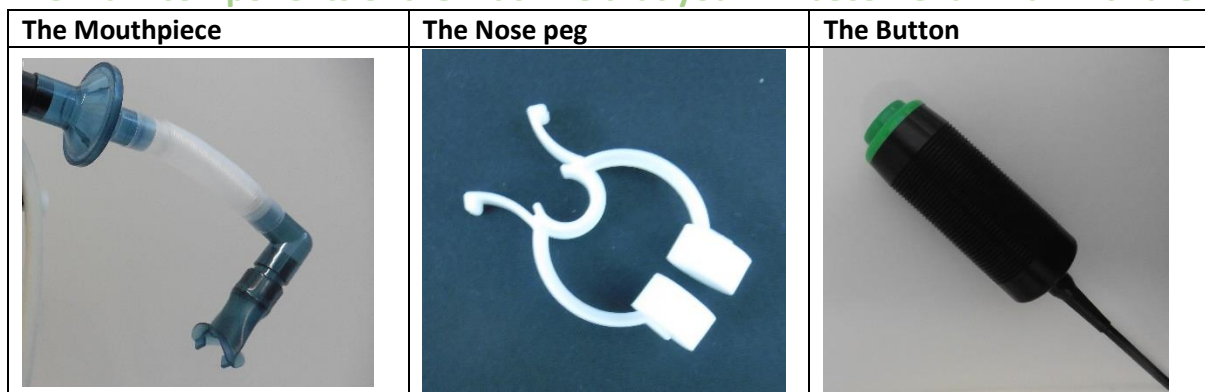
The ABC device measures how much air you breathe in. Once you breathe in a certain amount of air, the device will activate and you will feel the device supporting you to hold that specific amount of air. The amount will be dependent on what you are comfortable holding and will be determined during your coaching session.

What is required of me while using it?

You will have a coaching session with the ABC device. This is an opportunity to see if the technique is a good fit for you. You will see the ABC device in person, ask questions and familiarise yourself with how it works by using it yourself.



The main components of the machine that you will become familiar with are:



The Mouthpiece

The mouthpiece is the piece of equipment that you will breathe into. It is very similar to a snorkel. There are bits on the mouthpiece for you to bite on to ensure a comfortable fit. It is important that you have a good seal around this mouthpiece and ensure you are only breathing in and out through this piece of equipment.

The Nose peg

The nose peg sits on your nose and stops you from breathing in and out through it. This ensures that the air that you breathe in comes through your mouth alone. This is how the ABC device can accurately determine the amount of air you breathe in.

The Button

The button is your way of communication with staff and ensures you are in control while using the ABC device. Before you breathe in, you will be instructed to hold the button down first. When you hold this button down, the ABC machine will know to help you hold your breath. You will need to hold this button down for the duration of the time that you hold your breath. If at any stage you are unable to hold your breath any longer, all you need to do is release the button and you will feel yourself able to breathe through the mouthpiece.

How can I prepare?

For optimum use of the ABC machine, you will be required to hold your breath for a minimum of 20 seconds at a time. You can try to see if you are able to hold your breath for this amount of time and let the team member know how you went at your coaching session. At the coaching session, we will be looking to see that you are able to hold your breath for at least 20 seconds, 3 times with a short break in between each breath hold. This simulates the breath hold requirements during treatments. When using the ABC machine, the amount of air you need to hold in will not be 100% of your lung capacity. The amount that of air that you hold will be at a comfortable level, which will be determined at your coaching session.

Is it safe?

Absolutely. The ABC devices have regular quality assurance tests performed on them to ensure they are working, as they should. The system is designed to ensure that no treatment will be delivered unless the correct amount of air is taken in through the mouthpiece. As described earlier, you are in control during the whole process and you can breathe in if you need to by releasing the button.

What if it doesn't work for me?

The ABC device will not be suitable for everyone. The most important thing is that you are comfortable and relaxed when it is in use. If ABC does not suit you, please do not worry, as there are other treatment options available.