



**Decorticate posture** (Lewis, Heitkemper, and Dirksen, 2000)

**decrepitate percussion** /dēkrep'itit/, a crackling noise produced by tapping the thoracic or abdominal wall of a patient with a respiratory disorder.

**decrudescence** /dē'krōōdes'əns/ [L, *de*, from, *crudescere*, to become bad], a decrease in the severity of symptoms.

**decubital** /dikyōō'bitəl/ [L, *decumbere*, to lie down], pertaining to bedsores.

**decubitus** /dikyōō'bitəs/ [L, *decumbere*, to lie down], a recumbent or horizontal position, as lateral decubitus, lying on one side.

**decubitus angina**, a condition characterized by periodic attacks of cardiac pain that occur when a person is lying down.

**decubitus position**, a position used in producing a radiograph of the chest or abdomen of a patient who is lying down, with the central ray horizontal. The patient may be prone (ventral decubitus), supine (dorsal decubitus), or on the left or right side (left or right lateral decubitus). Also called **decubitus projection**.

**decubitus posture**, the position assumed by a bedridden patient to rest on his or her side to relieve the pressure of body weight on the sacrum, heels, or other areas vulnerable to pressure (decubitus) ulcers.

**decubitus projection**. See **decubitus position**.

**decubitus ulcer**. See **pressure ulcer**.

**decubitus ulcer care**. See **pressure ulcer care**.

**decussate** /dəkus'āt/ [L, *decussis*, intersection], to cross in the form of an "X," as certain nerve fibers from the retina cross at the optic chiasm. —**decussation**, *n*.

**decussation** /di'kusā'shən/ [L, *decussare*, to make a cross], a crossing of central nervous system fibers in the brain, as some fibers on the left side cross to the right side, and vice versa.

**decussation of pyramids** [L, *decussare*, to make a cross; Gk, *pyramis*], the crossing of nerve fibers of the corticospinal motor tract at the ventral side on the lower portion of the medulla oblongata.

**dedifferentiation**. See **anaplasia**.

**deductible** /dēduk'tibəl/, an amount paid each year by a health insurance plan enrollee before benefits begin. It is not synonymous with copayment.

**deduction** [L, *deducere*, to lead], a system of reasoning that leads from a known principle to an unknown, or from the general to the specific. Deductive reasoning is used to test diagnostic hypotheses.

**deemed status** /dēmd/ [AS, *deman*, to judge; L, *status*, a standing], a status conferred on a hospital or other organi-

zation by a professional standards review organization (PSRO) in formal recognition that the organization's review, continued-stay review, and medical care evaluation programs meet certain effectiveness criteria.

**deep bite**. See **closed bite**.

**deep brachial artery** [As, *dyppan*, to dip; Gk, *brachion*, arm, *arteria*, airpipe], a branch of each of the brachial arteries, arising at the distal border of the teres major, passing deeply into the arm between the long and lateral heads of the triceps brachii, and supplying the humerus and muscles of the upper arm. It has five branches: ascending, radial collateral, middle collateral, muscular, and nutrient. Also called **superior profunda artery**.

**deep breathing and coughing exercises**, movements used to improve pulmonary gas exchange or to maintain respiratory function, especially after prolonged inactivity or general anesthesia. Incisional pain after surgery in the chest or abdomen often inhibits normal respiratory movements. See also **cupping and vibrating**, **postural drainage**.



**Deep breathing and coughing exercises**

(Sorrentino 2000)

■ **METHOD:** The patient is assisted to a comfortable position, supine or sitting up. An analgesic may be given before the exercises if pain is present. Inhalation through the nose and exhalation through the mouth are encouraged. With the incision supported, the patient is asked to cough after a deep inhalation. If pain prevents the patient from producing a deep,