

Respiratory function test

A Respiratory Function Test (RFT) is a series of breathing tests where you will be required to breathe in different patterns through a mouthpiece. These patterns may require you to breathe fast, take big breaths in, empty your lungs out and hold your breath. A RFT is a simple, non-invasive way to examine the lungs and your breathing. A Respiratory Scientist will explain and guide you through the tests and while the time this takes will vary with the type of test your doctor asks for, most will be completed in 45 minutes.

WHY AM I HAVING THIS TEST?

There are many different reasons to have a lung function test. Some of these reasons include:

- To diagnose the cause of a cough or shortness of breath
- To evaluate the severity of disease
- To track disease progression

WHAT DO I BRING TO MY TEST?

If you take any inhalers bring these along with you to your test as well as your Spacer / Volumatic device for asthma puffers (if you have one). Wear comfortable clothing that will not restrict your breathing.

COULD I FEEL UNWELL DURING THE TEST?

During the testing you may feel a little bit breathless. The tests can also make you cough and you may feel lightheaded for a few seconds. This is normal and you will be given time to recover between tests. There are no side effects from testing and you will be fine to drive home afterwards.

TYPES OF BREATHING TESTS

Depending on what tests your doctor has requested, you may be required to perform one or more of the breathing tests listed below. The test will be fully explained to you by a Scientist at your appointment.

Spirometry: This test is performed using a spirometer and measures how much and how fast air can be blown out of the lungs. Sometimes a bronchodilator such as Ventolin will be given to test whether it will help increase the amount of air. After inhaling the Ventolin a 10-15 minute rest is allowed to ensure maximal benefit and then the spirometry test is repeated.

Gas Transfer Test: This test assesses the ability of the lungs to transfer oxygen from the air to the blood. It involves taking a deep breath of a special gas, holding the breath in the lungs for a few seconds before breathing out again.

Static Lung Volumes: This test measures the total lung capacity which can be altered in various lung conditions. Measurement is made in a clear booth called a body plethysmograph, the test takes 5 minutes to perform, and requires quiet breathing and occasional small panting breaths.

Six Minute Walk Test: This test requires you to walk as far as possible in 6 minutes while having your heart rate and oxygen level monitored. Patients are requested to wear comfortable shoes.

Please turn over for more information

PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS:

All patients are asked to refrain from the following before all tests:

- Smoking (2 hours)
- Consuming alcohol or caffeinated drinks (4 hours)
- Performing vigorous exercise (1 hour)

If you have a cold or flu symptoms call one of our Scientists on (07) 3049 6776 or (07) 3049 3440 to discuss this.

MEDICATIONS TO WITHOLD PRIOR TO YOUR RESPIRATORY TEST

Many of the drugs that you may use interfere with the test and should be ceased prior to the test, **unless it is absolutely necessary to take them.**

Do NOT use for 4 hours prior to test:

- **Ventolin, Airomir, Asmol** (salbutamol)
- **Bricanyl** (terbutaline)

Do NOT use for 12 hours prior to test:

- **Seretide** (salmeterol / fluticasone propionate)
- **Atrovent** (ipratropium bromide)
- **Symbicort** (budesonide / eformoterol)
- **Oxis** (eformoterol)
- **Flutiform** (fluticasone / eformoterol fumarate)
- **Serevent** (salmeterol)

Do NOT use for 24 hours prior to test:

- **Spiriva** (tiotropium bromide)
- **Onbrez** (indacaterol)
- **Bretaris Genuair** (aclidinium)
- **Incruse** (umeclidinium)
- **Breo** (fluticasone propionate/ formoterol)
- **Seebri** (glycopyrronium)
- **Spiolto** (tiotropium/ olodaterol)
- **Brimica** (aclidinium/ formoterol)
- **Anoro** (umeclidinium/ vilanterol)
- **Ultibro** (indacaterol/ glycopyrronium)