



## WHAT ARE LUNG FUNCTION TESTS?

Lung (Pulmonary) Function Tests are breathing tests used to measure how well your lungs are working. Different tests determine how much air your lungs can hold, how quickly you can move air in and out of the lungs and how well your lungs can supply oxygen into your bloodstream.

# Lung Function Testing



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## WHY ARE LUNG (PULMONARY) FUNCTION TESTS PERFORMED?

- To determine the cause of breathing problems
- To diagnose certain lung diseases such as asthma or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- To evaluate lung function before surgery
- To monitor the lung function of a person regularly exposed to potentially harmful substances such as asbestos which can damage the lungs
- To monitor the effectiveness of current treatment for lung disease

## HOW ARE LUNG (PULMONARY) FUNCTION TESTS PERFORMED?

The tests are performed on equipment which you breathe into via a mouthpiece and are conducted by a specially trained respiratory physiologist.

**Spirometry is the most commonly performed lung function test. It measures how effectively and quickly the lungs can be emptied.**

For this test, you breathe into a mouthpiece attached to a recording device (spirometer). The spirometer records the amount and the rate of air that you breathe in and out over a period of time.

For some of the test measurements, you can breathe normally and quietly. Other tests require forced inhalation or exhalation. The exact procedure is different for each type of test and the accuracy of the tests depends on your ability to follow all of the instructions.

## HOW WILL THE TEST FEEL?

Since the test involves some forced breathing and rapid breathing, you may have some temporary shortness of breath or light-headedness. During the test you will breathe through a tight-fitting mouthpiece while wearing nose clips.

## HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR THE TEST?

- Do not eat a heavy meal before the test
- Do not smoke for 4 to 6 hours before the test
- You will get specific instructions if you need to stop using bronchodilators or inhaler medications
- Your cooperation while performing the test is crucial in order to get accurate results. A poor seal around the mouthpiece of the spirometer can give poor results that can't be interpreted.

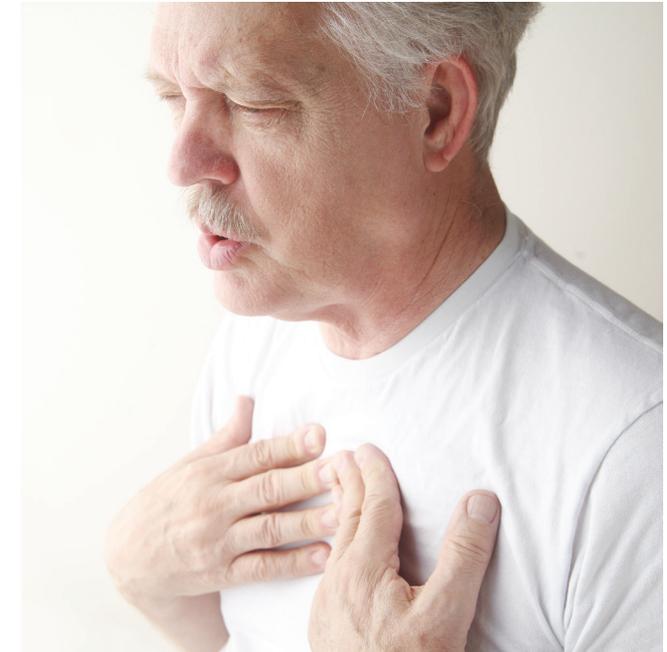
## WHEN WILL I GET MY RESULTS?

A GP referral is required for testing. Your results are reported by our respiratory physicians, sent back to your GP and can be expected in one week. Your GP will then be able to discuss the results and, if needed, your treatment plan at your next appointment.

If you would like further information or to make a booking for Lung Function Testing at the Woolcock Clinic please contact us.

If you answer YES to any of these questions, you may benefit from testing to find the cause of your breathing problems:

- Do you become short of breath when walking up inclines or climbing stairs?
- Do you have a persistent cough?
- Do you wheeze when you breathe?
- Does your chest get tight?
- Have you ever been a smoker?
- Have you ever worked in a dusty occupation?
- Are you finding your breathing medication ineffective?



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