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## Pulmonary Function Testing

### **What is a Pulmonary Function Test?**

Pulmonary Function Testing involves a few different exercises to measure how well the lungs take in and release air. There are four measurements that determine the size and strength of your lungs, as well as your ability to take in oxygen and release carbon dioxide.

### **How is the test performed?**

A Registered Respiratory Therapist, or Nurse will assist you with Pulmonary Function Testing and a Respiriologist (lung specialist) will read the results. You will be seated in a small cubicle, about the size of a telephone booth. All of the tests require you to breathe through a round mouthpiece while wearing nose plugs. This allows the technologist to obtain the most accurate measurement of your breathing. You may be asked to do any of the following:

- Breathe quietly, at a resting pace
- Take a deep breath in
- Blow out all of your air as quickly and forcefully as possible
- Hold your breath for 8-10 seconds
- 'Panting' exercises (2-3 seconds) against an open and blocked mouthpiece

Usually, this test involves taking a couple doses of an inhaled medicine, or puffer, to see if there is any change in your test results. The test may take anywhere from 15-45 minutes.

### **How do I prepare for the test?**

Please refrain from smoking and avoid eating large meals prior to your test. If this is your first visit, please withhold all inhalers (puffers) for at least 12 hours prior to your appointment.

Please bring a list of your current medications.

Please inform our office of any recent surgeries, particularly performed on the abdomen, or eyes.



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### **How will the test feel?**

Some of these maneuvers involve some rapid and/or forceful breathing. You will also be asked to continue breathing out until your lungs are nearly empty, and the door to the testing cubicle may be closed for 2-3 minutes during this procedure.

You may feel any of the following symptoms:

- Lightheadedness
- Shortness of breath
- Chest tightness
- Dry mouth
- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Claustrophobia

These symptoms should subside within a few minutes of completing testing. The technologist will allow rest between maneuvers and the test will be stopped if discomfort continues.

### **Why did my doctor ask for this test?**

There may be a number of reasons your doctor has asked for this test. Some of which may be:

- To diagnose certain types of lung disease such as asthma, bronchitis, emphysema
- To find the cause of shortness of breath, cough, or wheeze
- To measure lung function after exposure to chemicals or other hazards in the workplace
- To measure your baseline before a surgery
- To assess the effect of medication
- To follow-up on progress in disease treatment