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**PULMONARY FUNCTION TEST**  
**Patient Information**

**What is a Pulmonary Function Test?**

Pulmonary function tests (PFT's) are breathing tests to find out how well you move air in and out of your lungs and how well oxygen enters your body. The most common PFT's are spirometry (spy-RAH-me-tree), diffusion studies and lung volumes.

**Spirometry** is one of the most commonly ordered lung function tests. The spirometer measures how much air you can breathe into your lungs and how much air you can quickly blow out of your lungs. You will be blowing into a tube connected to a machine (spirometer) and asked to take in a deep breath and then, as fast as you can, blow out all of the air.

**Diffusion tests** find out how well the oxygen in the air you breathe into your lungs moves from your lungs into your blood. Like spirometry, this test is done by having you breathe into a mouthpiece connected to a machine. You will be asked to empty your lungs by gently breathing out as much air as you can. Then you will breathe in a quick but deep breath, hold your breath for 10 seconds, and then breathe out as instructed. It usually takes about 15 minutes to complete this test.

**Lung Volumes** is a test to find out how much air is in your lungs after you take in a deep breath, and how much air is left in your lungs after breathing out as much as you can. No matter how hard you try, you can never get all of the air out of your lungs. Measuring the total amount of air your lungs can hold and the amount of air left in your lungs after you breathe out gives your health care provider information about how well your lungs are working and helps guide them in your treatment.

**Results:**

You can expect a call with results within 2 weeks.

**Lung function tests can be used to:**

- Compare your lung function with standards that show how your lungs should be working
- Measure the effect of chronic diseases like asthma, chronic obstructive lung disease (COPD), or cystic fibrosis on lung function.
- Identify early changes in lung function that might show a need for a change in treatment.
- Detect narrowing in the airways
- Decide if a medicine (such as a bronchodilator/inhaler) could be helpful to you
- Show whether exposure to substances at home or workplace have harmed your lungs.



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- Determine your ability to tolerate surgery and medical procedures.

**PRE-PROCEDURE INSTRUCTIONS**

- There is no prep for this test
- You may have a light meal prior to the test
- No smoking 6 hours before test
- No caffeine (coffee, tea, cola, energy drinks etc.) 4 hours prior to the test
- Do not drink alcohol 4 hours prior to the test
- If you are on oxygen, you will be asked to be off during the test
- If you have a cold, increased coughing or are feeling ill the day of the test, check with the testing center about postponing your test
- See below for directions on stopping certain medications
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Medicines which may need to be stopped before a Pulmonary Function Test**

If you are taking this medicine...	Stop taking it before the test
Quick-acting bronchodilators such as albuterol (Proventil®, Ventolin®, ProAir®), levalbuterol (Xopenex®) or pirbuterol (Maxair®)	8 Hours
Long-acting bronchodilators such as formoterol (Foradil®), salmeterol (Serevent®) or tiotropium (Spiriva®)	48 Hours
Combination products such as budesonide/formoterol (Symbicort®) or fluticasone /salmeterol (Advair®)	48 Hours
Antihistamines (such as certirizine (Zyrtec®), fexofenadine (Allegra®) or loratadine (Claritin®) 12 to 24 hours.	12-24 Hours
Leukotriene modifiers such as montelukast (Singulair®) or zifirlukast (Accolate®)	24 Hours
Nedocromil (Tilade®)	48 Hours
Cromolyn sodium (Intal®)	8 Hours
Ipratropium bromide (Atrovent®) or ipratropium/albuterol (Combivent®)	24 Hours
Check with your health care provider or testing center to find out when you should stop these medications prior to testing. These do not always need to be stopped. Check with your health care provider or the testing center.	



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Inhaled corticosteroids such as beclomethasone (QVAR®), budesonide (Pulmicort®), fluticasone (Flovent®), mometasone furoate (Asmanex®) or triamcinolone (Azmacort®)

<http://patients.thoracic.org/information-series/en/resources/lung-function-studies.pdf>