SPIROMETRY

Information for patients

Spirometry is a test that can help to diagnose various lung conditions. It is also used to monitor these conditions and their response to treatment.

What is a spirometer?

A Spirometer is a device that measures the amount of air you can breathe out and its speed. You will be asked to breathe in as much as you can and blow out as much as you can through a mouthpiece.

Preparation

Spirometry is a very low risk test, but because it involves effort it is important to make sure it is suitable for you.

Please tell the nurse/doctor if you have:
- Unstable angina
- A recent heart attack or stroke
- A recent collapsed lung
- Recent eye, abdominal or chest surgery
- Coughed up blood and the cause is not known
- Uncontrolled high blood pressure
- Ear infection
- Are feeling ill on the day e.g. vomiting

If you are unwell with symptoms of chest infection please cancel the test and rebook when you have been well for 4 weeks.

Before the test you should **NOT**:
- Smoke for at least 1 hour
- Have had a large meal in the last 2 hours
- Have drunk alcohol in the last 4 hours
- Wear restrictive clothing
- Have had vigorous exercise in the last 30 minutes
- Drunk caffeine in the last 4 hours

Reversibility Test

You may be asked to do a reversibility test. This involves doing a spirometry test then inhaling medication through a suitable inhaler. The spirometry test is then repeated 20 minutes or 45 minutes later, depending on which inhaler you are given.

This test can be affected by inhalers / medication you may be taking. You will be advised to try to stop using them, for the period indicated below, before the test:

		Withhold for
Relievers:	Salbutamol, Terbutaline	4 hours
	Ipratropium	6 hours
Long acting bronchodilators:	Salmeterol, Formoterol	24 hours
	Tiotropium	36 hours
Theophylline Tablets:	Twice a day preparations	24 hours
	Once a day preparations	48 hours

If you have taken them before the test, please tell the nurse / doctor so this can be taken into account.