

Pulmonary Function Testing

Pulmonary function tests are a series of breathing tests performed to evaluate your lung function and severity of lung disease.

Reasons for Pulmonary Function Tests

To help your physician diagnose lung diseases such as emphysema, asthma, and restrictive lung diseases

To evaluate the progress of lung disease over time

To evaluate the appropriate medical therapy for lung disease

To evaluate the risk of lung complications related to general anesthesia and surgery

Preparing For The Test

If you smoke, you will be asked to refrain from smoking for 24 hours before the test, or as long as possible.

Inhaled medications taken every 12 hours that are used for lung conditions must not be used for 12 hours before the test. Other inhaled medications taken every 4 – 6 hours, must not be used 4 – 6 hours before the test.

Eat only a small meal before the test. Consuming a large meal prior to the breathing test will limit your ability to take deep breaths and will compromise the test results.

Wear comfortable clothing that will not restrict your ability to breath deeply.

How The Test Is Performed

Complete pulmonary function testing includes 6 different breathing tests. Each test is a different combination of instructions for breathing in and out, and the technician will give very specific directions on what to do with each test. A nose clip will be placed on your nose so that all breathing can accurately be measured by the computerized equipment. One of the tests is taken in a clear glass enclosed booth.

You will be given an inhaled medication called Albuterol which dilates the smaller tissues inside your lungs, so that the results from one of the tests can be measured before and after medication.

There are no residual side effects from pulmonary function testing, but you may temporarily cough more for a short time after the testing.

