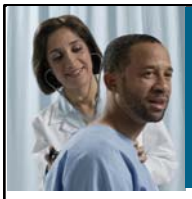

# Spirometry

HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR VISIT

## What is spirometry?

Spirometry is the most commonly performed test of lung function. A device called a spirometer is used to measure how much air the lungs can hold and how well the respiratory system is able to move air into and out of the lungs. Because spirometry is based on how fast a patient can move air out of the lungs, the accuracy of its results are highly dependent on the patient's understanding, cooperation, and best efforts.

## Why would I need a spirometry test?

This test is used to determine the cause of shortness of breath, to rule out any kind of lung disease that blocks breathing, or limits the expansion and capacity of the lungs. Spirometry is most often used to diagnose and monitor lung problems, such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or asthma.

Spirometry is also used to monitor how well medications for respiratory problems are working and to evaluate breathing capability prior to surgery.

## How is spirometry performed?

A spirometry test is done with a spirometer, which consists of a mouthpiece and disposable tubing connected to a machine that records the results and displays them on a graph.

To perform spirometry, a person inhales deeply, closes the mouth tightly around the tube and then exhales through the tubing while measurements are taken. Some test measurements are obtained by normal breathing, and other tests require rapid and forceful inhalation and/or exhalation. The volume of air inhaled or exhaled, and the length of time each breath takes is recorded and analyzed.

Nose clips are usually used to make sure air is only coming out of the mouth. Sometimes a test will be repeated to get the best and maximum effort. Often, the tests are repeated after a person takes a medication that opens the airways of the lungs (a bronchodilator). A spirometry test can take anywhere from five minutes to a half an hour, depending on the different types of breathing tests being measured.

## Are there risks associated with spirometry?

The risks are minimal for most people. Because the test involves forced and rapid breathing, some people may experience temporary shortness of breath. Spirometry should not be done if a person suffers from chest pains, has had a recent heart attack, or has serious heart disease.

## How should I prepare for spirometry?

* Do not eat a heavy meal before spirometry testing.
* Refrain from smoking for four to six hours before the test.
* Empty your bladder right before testing.

**Please stop:**

* Albuterol, Ventolin, Proventil, Pro-Air 4 HOURS prior to testing.
* Atrovent, Combivent 6 HOURS prior to testing.
* Serevent, Advair 12 HOURS prior to testing.
* Spiriva 24 HOURS prior to testing.