

Child health information factsheet

Lung function tests

Lung function tests measure how well your child's lungs are working. He or she will be asked to take part in breathing exercises using equipment that measure their lungs in different ways.



Lung function tests include spirometry and lung volumes.

Spirometry

This test looks at how fast and how long your child can blow out air through their airways.

They will be asked to breathe in until their lungs are completely filled with air before blowing out as hard, fast and for as long as they can through a mouthpiece and into a measuring device.

This test, only takes about five minutes to complete, but some young children need a lot of encouragement to try new things so the test may take a little longer.

Lung volumes

This test involves sitting within a piece of equipment called a body plethysmograph.



This test measures the pressures in the lungs and shows the size and volume of your child's lungs.

Lung volumes take about 15 minutes but will depend how well your child follows the instructions for the test. These tests do not cause any discomfort and we aim to make them as fun as possible.

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Reversibility

Reversibility testing is done when the diagnosis is not clear.

For this test a spirometry is performed then an inhaler or nebuliser is given to open up the airways. After 20 minutes the spirometry test is done again.

The aim of this test is to see if the airways open wider with medication or not.

Test results

The lung function test results will be given to your child's consultant soon after the test is finished. The consultant will go through the results with you.

Being there with your child

We actively involve you in the tests and encourage you to ask questions as you know your child best and your help is very useful.

Before the test

- Please ensure your child wears loose clothing that does not restrict their chest and abdominal movement
- Please do not let him or her perform vigorous exercise for at least 30 minutes before the test
- Please do not let your child eat or drink large amounts just before the test.

Inhalers and medication

Please bring your child's inhalers to clinic. If he or she takes inhaled steroids (Fluticasone, Budesonide or Beclomethasone) please continue to take them as advised by your doctor.

If your child regularly uses bronchodilators stop using them for the times below:

- **Salbutamol:** do not take for four hours before the tests
- **Ipratopium bromide:** do not take for six hours before the tests
- **Salmeterol:** do not take for 12 hours before the tests.

If your child finds it difficult to manage without their inhaler, please use the bronchodilator and write down the dose and the time it is used.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact

Natasha Liddle, paediatric respiratory technician: 023 8077 7222 ext 8368

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8079 4688 for help.