

Pulmonary Function Testing

Pulmonary function tests are breathing tests performed to evaluate lung function and lung disease.

Reasons for Pulmonary Function Tests

1. To help your physician diagnose lung diseases such as emphysema, asthma, and restrictive lung disease.
2. To evaluate the progress of lung disease over time.
3. To evaluate the appropriate medical therapy for the lung disease.
4. To evaluate the risk of lung complications related to general anesthesia and surgery.

Preparing For The Test

1. No cigarette smoking 4 to 6 hours prior to the test.
2. Eat only a small meal prior to 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.
3. Your physician will tell you whether to refrain from using your breathing medications prior to your test. You may be tested before and after using breathing medications.

How the Test Is Performed

1. The pulmonary technician will ask you to breathe into a tube. He/She may ask you to breathe normally then take in a deep breath. For another test, the technician may have you take in a deep breath and exhale as fast as you can.
2. A nose clip will be placed on your nose, so all of your breathing is through your mouth.
3. You may be given some medicine to inhale, to see whether you benefit from taking particular medicines.
4. There are no side effects from undergoing pulmonary function testing.