

Breathing Test Information Sheet

This sheet provides information about the two basic breathing tests we offer here in the Treatment Centre – **spirometry** and **FeNO**. Your GP or nurse may have asked you to have one or both done. We hope it answers some of the questions or thoughts you may have. On the day, we will talk them through in more detail and check it is safe to complete with you.

Please ensure your chest has been well for the last six weeks. If you have needed antibiotics or oral steroids in this time, you will need to ensure your appointment is six weeks after this, so that your lungs have recovered before you come in for the test.

What is Spirometry?

Spirometry is a simple breathing test that measures the amount of air you can breathe out, and how quickly. It helps us diagnose and monitor lung conditions such as asthma, COPD, and other breathing problems.

How is the test performed?

On arrival, we will measure your height and weight and then ask you to sit upright in a chair next to the device. You will be asked to take a deep breath in and blow into the hand-held spirometer, firstly with a soft blow out and then with as much force and speed as you can. This routine will be repeated several times to ensure the results are consistent. The appointment usually takes 20 minutes.

It is possible that we will need to repeat the test after an inhaler, to see if your lungs respond to it. This helps us to make a diagnosis. If this happens, your appointment will be for 40-50 minutes as we wait 15 minutes after the inhaler is given.

You will be given a 40 minute appointment slot so ensure you have enough time.

Are there any risks and will it hurt?

No, spirometry is very safe. You may experience a brief period of breathlessness, dizziness and/or coughing after each blow. You will be encouraged to do your best and will be given time between each blow, but you must inform us if it is causing you to feel unwell. However, these symptoms will pass quickly.

How should I prepare for spirometry?

If you are already taking regular inhalers or medication for your breathing, please bring them to your appointment but we ask that you do not use them, if possible. Please look at the list below to see which ones you would normally take. Please note how long before the appointment you should stop them.

Reliever inhalers (these are usually blue) – e.g. Salbutamol, Salamol, Ventolin. Please avoid taking in the 4-6 hours before the appointment

Preventer inhalers – e.g. Fostair, Symbicort, Seretide. Please avoid taking for 24 hours before the testing.

Anoro, Onbrez, Relvar, Spiriva, Incruse, Seebri. Please avoid taking for 36 hours before testing.

Triple therapy inhalers – e.g. Trelegy, Trimbow, Ultibro. Please avoid taking for 24 hours before testing.

If you feel breathless and need to use any of your inhalers before the appointment, please inform us at the start of your appointment; it will not matter, but it helps when reviewing the results.

If you do not take any inhalers, you only need to avoid the activities mentioned next.

Other Instructions:

- Please do take all your other medications as normal
- Please do bring any inhalers you have to the appointment
- Please do not smoke in the 24 hours before the test
- Please do not drink alcohol on the day of the test
- Please do not have caffeine e.g. tea/coffee in the 4 hours before the test
- Please avoid eating a large meal 2 hours before the test
- Please avoid vigorous exercise in the last 30 minutes
- Please wear non-restrictive, comfortable clothing.

How long do I have to wait after the test before I can leave?

You can leave straightaway as there is no recovery period. You can drive and return to your work or normal activities afterwards.

What is FeNO?

FeNO is a simple breathing test that measures the amount of nitric oxide gas that is in your 'out' breath. This is produced when your lungs are inflamed (or 'angry'). It helps us diagnose and monitor asthma.

How is the test performed?

On arrival, we will ask you a few questions to check the testing is alright to complete. We complete the test in standing. You will be asked to breathe in slowly and deeply, then you will breathe out gently and steadily into a mouthpiece. The breath out needs to last for about 8–10 seconds. The test only takes a few minutes.

Are there any risks and will it hurt?

No, FeNO is very safe, and it is painless. You will be encouraged to do your best and will have the chance to repeat it to get the reading we need. We get the reading straight away.

How should I prepare for FeNO?

Before the test, please avoid eating or drinking (other than water) for at least 1 hour.

Certain green, leafy vegetables are high in nitrates so please avoid eating beetroot, spinach, lettuce, celery, leeks, rocket and watercress on the day of test (ideally not within 12 hours).

Please do not smoke or vape on the day of the test. Please avoid strenuous exercise for at least 1 hour before the appointment and please do not drink alcohol for at least 12 hours.

If you are already taking regular inhalers or medication for your breathing, please bring them to your appointment but we ask that you do not use them, if possible. Please look at the list below to see which ones you would normally take. Please note how long before the appointment you should stop them.

Preventer inhalers – e.g. Fostair, Symbicort, Seretide. Please avoid taking for 24 hours before the testing.

Anoro, Onbrez, Relvar, Spiriva, Incruse, Seebri. Please avoid taking for 36 hours before testing.

Triple therapy inhalers – e.g. Trelegy, Trimbow, Ultibro. Please avoid taking for 24 hours before testing.

If you feel breathless and need to use any of these inhalers before the appointment, please inform us at the start of your appointment; it will not matter, but it helps when reviewing the results.

If you do not take any inhalers, you only need to avoid the foods and activities mentioned above.

How long do I have to wait after the test before I can leave?

You can leave straightaway as there is no recovery period. You can drive and return to your work or normal activities afterwards.

Please do not hesitate to contact your surgery if you have any other questions.

BEC Treatment Centre