



## STREATHAM PARK SURGERY

### LUNG FUNCTION TEST (SPIROMETRY)

Spirometry is used to assist in the diagnosis of some lung conditions like Asthma and COPD. It also helps us assess your response to common treatments and determines the severity of your breathing problems.

Spirometry measures the amount of air you can breathe out from your lungs and how fast you can blow it out. You'll be asked to take a very deep breath and blow out as fast as you can into a mouthpiece, until no more air comes out.

#### What happens during the test?

You will be asked some questions before you start, to check you are medically fit to do the test. It is important to put as much effort into the test as you can, so the results are accurate.

You'll be asked to sit comfortably and may have a clip put on your nose to make sure all the air goes into the mouthpiece. You will be shown how to blow into the spirometer before starting. You may be asked to blow 3 or more times into the spirometer, to check the readings are similar each time.

Normally, you will first be asked to breathe in deeply and out gently. Once your health care professional is happy with the results, you will move on to the next part of the test. You will have to breathe in again deeply, this time quite fast, and then breathe out as fast and as hard as you can until your lungs are empty.

Your health care professional may ask you to use your inhaler or other medication, wait 15–20 minutes and then repeat the test. For some drugs the wait may be 45 minutes between tests. This is called a **bronchodilator responsiveness test** or **reversibility test** and it's done to see if the medication improves your breathing. If you use inhalers, you should bring them to your appointment.

Occasionally, people feel a little light-headed and dizzy following the test. This usually lasts only a few moments. Let the person performing the test know, to make sure that you have time to recover.

## **How to prepare for the test.**

The assessment may take up to 40 minutes of your time.

Before you come for your assessment

- Avoid taking your reliever medication for at least 4 hours prior to the test.

*Reliever medications include: Salbutamol (Ventolin), Terbutalin (Bricanyl), Ipratropium (Atrovent), Combivent.* If you do need to take them, please inform the nurse upon arrival

- Avoid taking your long-acting reliever medications for at least 12 hours prior to the tests.

*Long-acting reliever medications include: Salmeterol (Servent), Eformoterol (Oxis), Tiotropium (Spiriva), Volmax, Bambec, Nuelin, Uniphyllin.* If you do need to take them, please inform the nurse upon arrival

- Avoid smoking for 24 hours prior to the test
- Avoid alcohol consumption 4 hours prior to the test
- Avoid exercise 1 hour prior to the test
- Avoid a heavy meal for at least 2 hours
- Avoid wearing restrictive clothing (such as a restrictive waistband) for the test

If you have any further questions please call and arrange to speak to the Nurse Practitioner Shirley