

*If you have
any questions
or concerns,
please talk
with the tech.*

Pulmonary Function Test (Full PFT)

A full pulmonary function test (PFT) is a group of tests that check lung function to determine:

- How easily air moves in and out of your lungs
- The amount of air your lungs can hold
- How much oxygen the lungs send to the heart

A full PFT, done in the Pulmonary Function Lab, often includes these tests:

- Bronchodilator response
- Diffusing capacity (DLCO)
- Lung volumes
- Pulse oximetry
- Spirometry/flow volume loop lung

Please refer to the brochure titles as listed above for more details about these tests. The total testing time is about 30 to 60 minutes.

Before the Test

There is no special preparation for these tests. Bronchodilator inhalers (such as Albuterol[®], Proventil[®], Ventolin[®], Combivent[®], or Maxair[®]) can affect the test results. **Unless you are having trouble breathing, do not use these inhalers for at least 4 hours before the exam.**

On the day of the test, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time. Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothes (nothing that would constrict your chest or make breathing difficult). If you wear glasses, hearing aids or dentures, please have them for the test. Also, be sure to bring:

- Your doctor's written order for the test
- A list of all your current medications (prescription and over-the-counter)
- Medical insurance information
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

Please come to the Galter Pavilion, 201 E. Huron St. Check in at the reception desk on the 8th floor.

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 E. Huron, across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For discounted rates, please bring your parking ticket with you. Tickets can be validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floor of the Feinberg and Galter pavilions; 1st floor of Prentice (including the Prentice 24-hour desk near the Superior entrance).

Please tell the technologist (tech) if you have:

- Used an inhaler in the last 4 hours
- Claustrophobia (discomfort with closed-in spaces)

During the Test

Most of the tests are done in a glass-enclosed booth called a body plethysmograph. You will be seated in a chair and a small plastic clip is placed on your nose. During the PFT, you will be asked to breathe into a filtered mouthpiece. The tech will give you specific instructions. It is important to keep a tight seal around the mouthpiece.

After the Test

You are free to leave as soon as the test is done. There are no diet or activity restrictions.

Initial test results are sent to your doctor within 48 hours. A full report follows in about 5 business days.

If you have questions about this test, please call the Pulmonary Function Lab at 312-926-3195.

Health Information Resources

For more information, visit one of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Health Learning Centers. These state-of-the-art health libraries are located on the third floor of the Galter Pavilion and on the first floor of the Prentice Women's Hospital. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Centers by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to hlc@nmh.org.

For additional information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit our Web site at www.nmh.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar a el departamento de representantes para pacientes al 312-926-3112.

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For more information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit www.nmh.org.

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