

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

Exercise Oximetry (Oxygen Dosing)

Exercise oximetry is used to check the oxygen level of your blood at rest and as you walk on a treadmill. The test is done to see:

- If oxygen therapy is needed for certain activities.
- How much oxygen should be used for these activities.

For this test, a small sensor, similar to a clip-on earring, is placed on your finger or earlobe. Then, using light waves, the oxygen level in the blood is measured.

Exercise oximetry, done in the Pulmonary Function Lab, takes about 30 minutes.

Before the Test

There is no special preparation for this test. On the day of the test, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time.

Be sure to bring:

- Your doctor's written order for the test (if one was given to you)
- A list of allergies
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter, and herbals)
- Photo ID
- Medical insurance information
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

Wear comfortable clothes and shoes for walking on the treadmill.

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

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 East Huron Street, 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.

During the Test

While you are seated in a chair, the tech attaches a small clip to your finger or earlobe. This clip is connected to a small computer screen by a thin cord. After about 5 minutes, the oxygen level appears on the screen. This level is recorded.

Next you walk at a normal pace on a treadmill, which may have an incline. You are asked to walk as long as you are able, but no longer than 6 to 15 minutes. Your oxygen level and heart rate are checked often and recorded. During the test, you may be given oxygen to breathe.

Once you are finished exercising, the tech will check your oxygen level.

After the Test

You are free to leave as soon as you return to your pre-exercise heart rate and oxygen levels. These will be checked. 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.

Northwestern Medicine – Health Information Resources

For more information, contact Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Alberto Culver Health Learning Center (HLC) at hlc@nm.org, or by calling 312.926.5465. Health information professionals can help you find the information you need and provide you with personal support at no charge.

For more information about Northwestern Medicine, please visit our website at nm.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar al Departamento de Representantes para Pacientes al 312.926.3112.

The entities that come together as Northwestern Medicine are committed to representing the communities we serve, fostering a culture of inclusion, delivering culturally competent care, providing access to treatment and programs in a nondiscriminatory manner and eliminating healthcare disparities. For questions, please call either Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Patient Representatives Department at 312.926.3112, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363 or the Northwestern Medical Group Patient Representatives Department at 312.695.1100, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363.

Developed by: NMH Pulmonary Function Lab