

Pulmonary function test (PFT)



What is a pulmonary function test (PFT)?

A pulmonary function test (PFT) is a breathing test that measures your child's lung capacity. It shows your child's doctor how well their lungs are working and how well they are breathing.

What should I do to help prepare my child?

- Your child can eat and drink like normal before and after the test but should not have anything with caffeine (such as cola, chocolate, tea and coffee) on the day of the test.
- Check with your child's doctor to see if they want you to change your child's medicines or treatments before the test. This includes breathing treatments, a metered dose inhaler (MDI) or medicine to help prevent breathing problems.
- Your child's doctor may want you to hold the medicines or treatments on the day of the test. This is based on the type of medicine your child takes.

What will the test be like?

- A trained technician does the test in a pulmonary lab.
- The test takes about 30 to 60 minutes. The time it takes depends on:
 - Which tests are ordered.
 - How well your child understands the directions.
- The test will not hurt your child.
- It is important for your child to listen and follow directions during the test so it will be correct.
- Parents or caregivers may stay in the room with their child during the test, but they will not be able to sit in the testing area.

Your child will be asked to:

- Sit in a large, clear box (like a phone booth).
- Place their mouth on a mouthpiece (like a snorkel).
- Wear nose clips.
- Breathe in different ways.

A member of your child's care team may give your child a breathing treatment or have them use their metered dose inhaler (MDI) and then repeat the test.

When do I get the results?

After the test, the report will be sent to a pulmonologist (lung doctor) to review. The results are sent to your child's doctor within 24 hours of the test.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.