Sleep & Lung Care
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Please read before your appointment

What happens, how to prepare and what to bring.

Your lung volume test (plethysmography)

Date: _____ Time: _____ Clinic: ☐ Epping ☐ Brunswick ☐ Doncaster East ☐ Braybrook ☐ Kilmore

Static lung volume measurement shows the total amount of air your lungs can hold and how much air is left in them after you breathe out as far as you can. It helps your doctor tell whether a lung condition is obstructive — narrowed airways, as in COPD, asthma or bronchiectasis — or restrictive, where the lungs cannot expand fully, for example in pulmonary fibrosis or sarcoidosis, or because of a curved spine or changes to the shape of the chest.

What happens during the test

- You sit inside a clear, sealed box (a body plethysmograph) with a soft clip on your nose and breathe through a mouthpiece. You can see out and talk to the respiratory scientist the whole time.
- You will be asked to pant or breathe quickly for a few seconds with your hands pressed firmly against your cheeks (to stop them puffing in and out), then to breathe in and out through the mouthpiece for a short time.
- Changes in pressure inside the box are used to work out the volume of air in your lungs. The measurements take only about 5 minutes, and the test is painless. Spirometry and gas transfer are usually done at the same visit.
- Your results are compared with the normal range for your age, height, sex and ethnicity; values outside that range may suggest obstruction or restriction.

Before your test

- Withhold your inhalers for the times in the table below — some medicines hide what the test is trying to measure.
- Bring all your inhalers and a list of your medicines and doses.
- No smoking or vaping for 1 hour, no alcohol for 8 hours, no vigorous exercise for 1 hour and no large meal for 2 hours before the test.
- If you are unwell on the day, call us before you come — the test may need to be rebooked.

On the day

- Wear loose, comfortable clothing.
- Bring your referral and Medicare card. Lung function tests are bulk billed with a current referral.
- Allow 45–90 minutes for your visit — most patients have more than one breathing test at the same appointment.

Do not stop a medicine you need to stay safe. If you need your reliever, take it and tell the scientist when you arrive — we can still test you or rebook. Unless your doctor or our reception team has told you otherwise, withhold the medicines below for the times shown; if you are unsure about any medicine, call (03) 9422 0077 before your appointment.

Medicines to withhold before the test

Medicine (examples)	Withhold for
Reliever puffers — salbutamol (Ventolin, Asmol, Airomir), terbutaline (Bricanyl)	4–6 hours
Ipratropium (Atrovent)	12 hours
Twice-daily long-acting and combination inhalers — Seretide, Symbicort, Flutiform, DuoResp, Fostair, Serevent, Oxis	24 hours
Once-daily long-acting inhalers (Breo Ellipta, Trelegy, Anoro, Ultibro, Spiolto, Onbrez, Striverdi), twice-daily triple-therapy inhalers (Trimbow, Breztri) and long-acting anticholinergics (Spiriva, Seebri, Incruse, Bretaris)	36–48 hours
Preventer-only inhaled steroid (Flixotide, Pulmicort, Qvar, Alvesco), montelukast (Singulair), antihistamines, theophylline (Nuelin)	Take as usual
Caffeine — coffee, tea, cola, energy drinks, chocolate	Avoid on the morning of the test

Your results

A respiratory scientist performs the tests and one of our respiratory physicians reports them. The report is sent to your referring doctor within two weeks. If your GP referred you for the tests only, your GP goes through the results with you (and can ask us for a consultation if the report recommends one); if you are already seeing one of our physicians, the results are discussed at your next appointment. If you have not heard from your doctor three weeks after the test, call (03) 9422 0077.

Cost, cancellations and questions

- Lung function tests are bulk billed with a valid referral — there is no charge for the test.
- To change or cancel your appointment, call (03) 9422 0077 during business hours (Monday to Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm). Please give at least 48 hours' notice.
- Arabic (العربية), Chinese (中文) and Vietnamese (Tiếng Việt) versions of these instructions are available from reception.
- Questions: (03) 9422 0077. Full guide online: **sleepandlungcare.com.au/our-service/static-lung-volumes**

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