



## Spirometry Patient Information Form

### What is spirometry?

Spirometry is a pulmonary function test that measures the function of your lungs. A spirometer is a device that measures the flow and volume of air entering and leaving the lungs. A computer compares your test results with predicted normal values, based on your gender, height, age, and ethnicity.

### When is spirometry used?

Spirometry is an integral tool to diagnose and monitor certain types of lung disease, such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema, pulmonary fibrosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or asthma. At Campus Health Services (CHS) spirometry is predominantly used to confirm the diagnosis of asthma, to assess efficacy of asthma treatments, and to monitor any changes in lung function.

### How do you prepare for spirometry?

1) **Schedule a CHS appointment with the Nursing Services front desk** for spirometry:

2) **Avoid the following items** for the time listed prior to spirometry:

- Vigorous exercise within ½ hour
- Heavy meal within ½ hour
- Short-acting rescue inhaler within 4-8 hours  
[e.g., albuterol (Ventolin®, Proventil®), levalbuterol (Xopenex®), pirbuterol (Maxair®)]  
**NOTE:** Do not hesitate to use your rescue inhaler if needed.
- Anticholinergics within 6 hours (e.g., Atrovent®)
- Long-acting bronchodilator inhaler within 12 hours (e.g., Serevent®, Advair®)
- Leukotriene antagonists within 24 hours (e.g., Singulair®, Accolate®, Zflo®)
- Oral bronchodilators within 24 hours (e.g., albuterol)
- Long-acting theophylline products within 36-48 hrs (e.g., Theo-24®, Theochron®)

3) **Bring a list of the medications** you are currently taking and the times you last took them to your spirometry appointment.

4) **Bring your rescue inhaler (e.g., albuterol )** to your spirometry appointment.

5) If you have questions or would like to reschedule your appointment, call **966-6573**.

### Who performs the spirometry and where?

Spirometry is performed by a registered nurse who has successfully completed a spirometry training course. Check in for your spirometry appointment at the Nursing Services desk on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of CHS.

### What are the risks of spirometry?

The risk is minimal for most people. Because spirometry involves forced and rapid breathing, some people may experience temporary shortness of breath. Spirometry should not be performed if you have had any recent heart problems, abdominal surgery, fractured ribs, clot in the lungs, or severe trauma.

### What happens during the test?

Spirometry is not painful but does require that you cooperate fully and provide the best effort possible to produce accurate results. You will be coached by the nurse to perform a number of breathing measurements. The breathing measurements are similar to blowing out birthday candles on a cake and breathing in and out as fast as you can. You will be breathing through a mouthpiece with a soft nose clip in place. You will be asked to complete at least three satisfactory measurements. You will have an opportunity to rest between measurements. You may be asked to inhale a short-acting medication that opens up your airways (e.g., albuterol). Spirometry testing takes from 30 to 60 minutes.

### What happens after spirometry?

The nurse performing the spirometry will schedule you a follow-up appointment with your CHS provider within 2 weeks after the test. Your spirometry results will be sent to your CHS provider who will interpret the results and discuss the results of your test with you at your next appointment. You may resume your normal diet, activity, and medications following spirometry.

### What is the cost of spirometry?

The CHS spirometry charge is substantially discounted from community rates. If you have insurance, you will need to call your insurance company to determine if they will pay for spirometry performed at CHS.