

Having a cardiopulmonary exercise test

Respiratory Physiology Department

Information for Patients

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Introduction

This leaflet tells you about your cardiopulmonary exercise (CPX) test. This is a medical test that accurately measures how your heart and lungs work when you exercise. You may need to have this test for 1 of the reasons below:

- To help your doctor understand why you may be having certain symptoms like shortness of breath.
- To look at your fitness before certain types of surgery. This will let us plan the level of care you will need after an surgery.

If you are **unwell before your appointment** or **you are scheduled for any surgery** in the **7 days before your test**, please call the Respiratory Physiology Unit on: **0116 258 3420** as we may need to move your appointment.

What will happen during the CPX test?

Your test will take place in the **Respiratory Physiology Unit**, Ground floor, South Entrance, Glenfield Hospital.

We will ask you to exercise on a bike to a set pattern. You will be wearing a mask while you do this. The exercise will get harder as you do the test. This is to make your heart and lungs work hard. We will measure and record your :

- breathing
- heart's rhythm (electrocardiogram (ECG))
- blood pressure
- oxygen levels

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To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

The more you are able to do, the more information we will have. We may stop the test if you get too tired. We may also stop the test if we feel it is needed.

How fit do I need to be to do the test?

Many patients worry that they may not be able to do the test. This is because they do not take part in regular exercise. This test is for everyone. It is for the elderly, unfit and athletes. We will change the difficulty of the test to match your estimated ability.

It is important that you try as hard as you can during the test. At the end of the test you will be working hard. You will feel out of breath. It will use muscles you may not have exercised for some time. So may make you feel tired later on. You may also get sore muscles or joints the next day. This is normal.

Some patients may not be able to finish the test if they cannot pedal the bike because of problems in their hips or knees.

How long will the appointment take?

It will take up to 1 hour. This includes time talking to you, signing a consent form if needed, examining you, having the lung function and exercise tests, and recovery time.

What do I need to wear for the test?

You should wear cool, comfortable clothing. Wear trainers or walking shoes. Clothing that is suitable for the gym is ideal.

Can I eat before the test?

Yes. But, we advise you not to have a large meal right before your test. It is best to have a light meal a few hours before. You should avoid caffeine (coffee, tea, energy drinks and cola) and alcohol. If you are diabetic, we advise you to bring snacks to have after the test.

Should I take my usual medicines before the test?

Yes. Please take all your usual medicines, unless we ask you not to.

Smoking

For patients who smoke, **do not** smoke for at least 8 hours before your test. Smoking before your test may cause you to have a falsely poor result.

What are the risks of this test?

The risks of CPX are the same as for mild exercise. The number of patients that get problems during the test are 1 in 1000 cases. This is very low.



The complications that may happen during the test are: abnormal blood pressure, fainting, and irregular, fast or slow heart rhythm.

We will closely monitor you throughout the test. We do this using continuous heart tracing (ECG). We monitor your blood pressure and oxygen measurements. You must let us know if you have any pain in your chest or feel unwell in any way. We will stop the test if you get any major symptoms.

What are the benefits of this test?

A CPX test puts stress on your heart and lungs in a controlled way. Depending on why you are having this test, the results can help with:

- Giving us data to see how fit you are. This will help your doctor find out what may be causing your symptoms.
- If you are due for surgery, the test is like a practice test to see how your body will cope with surgery and recovery. The data helps us decide what level of care you are likely to need after your surgery. If the test shows that you are very unfit, we will refer you to the correct specialists for more treatment. Or it may let us offer you other treatments.

When will I get the results?

We will send the results to your consultant.

If you are going for surgery, we will send the results to your surgical consultant and your anaesthetist. They will be able to talk to you about the results. If you need more information you can contact the Respiratory Physiology Unit on **0116 258 3420**.

Your results are confidential. Only the people looking after you will see them. Information about your tests will be used to monitor the quality of the service and report to our commissioners. Your personal information will be removed first (anonymised) before we do this. We will ask for your permission before using any personally identifiable data from your test for analysis or research.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

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