

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

## Lung Volume Test

A lung volume test measures the amount of air your lungs can hold. During this test, you breathe into a filtered mouthpiece that records your lung capacity.

A lung volume test, done in the Pulmonary Function Lab, takes about 10 to 20 minutes. However, this test is often done along with a full pulmonary function test (PFT), which can take 30 to 60 minutes.

### Before the Test

There is no special preparation for this test. Bronchodilator inhalers (such as Albuterol®, Proventil®, Ventolin®, Combivent®, or Maxair®) can affect the test results. **Unless you are having trouble breathing, do not use these inhalers for at least 4 hours before the exam.**

On the day of the test, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time. If you wear glasses, hearing aids or dentures, please have them for the test. Also, be sure to bring:

- Your doctor's written order for the test
- A list of all your current medications (prescription and over-the-counter)
- Medical insurance information
- Medicare Card (Medicare patients only)

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 E. Huron, 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).

*Patients First*

Please tell the technologist (tech) if you have:

- Used an inhaler in the last 4 hours
- Claustrophobia (discomfort with closed-in spaces).

## During the Test

This test can be done in one of two ways.

### *Inside a Body Plethysmograph*

You are seated in a chair in a glass-enclosed booth (body plethysmograph) and a small plastic clip is placed on your nose. Using a filtered mouthpiece, you are asked to take small shallow panting breaths for about 5 to 10 seconds at a time. Air flow and pressure readings are recorded. During the test, it is important to keep a tight seal around the mouthpiece. The tech is able to see and hear you while you are in the booth.

### *Outside a Body Plethysmograph (Gas Dilution)*

While you are seated in a chair, a small plastic clip is placed on your nose. A filtered mouthpiece is connected to an oxygen tank by a thin plastic tube. Using the mouthpiece, you are asked to breathe normally for 2 to 3 minutes. Oxygen levels are checked as you breathe. During the test, it is important to keep a tight seal around the mouthpiece.

## After the Test

You are free to leave as soon as the test is done. 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.

## Health Information Resources

For more information, visit one of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Health Learning Centers. These state-of-the-art health libraries are located on the third floor of the Galter Pavilion and on the first floor of the Prentice Women's Hospital. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Centers by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to [hlc@nmh.org](mailto:hlc@nmh.org).

For additional information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit our Web site at [www.nmh.org](http://www.nmh.org).

*Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar a el departamento de representantes para pacientes al 312-926-3112.*

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Developed by: Pulmonary Function Lab