

Information for patients attending for lung function tests with bronchodilator response (reversibility)

Reference Number: ULHT-LFT-4017 v1

Issued: December 2024

Review Date: December 2026

We would like to invite you to attend for breathing tests also known as a lung function test with bronchodilator response (reversibility) as requested by a consultant. This patient information will answer some questions you may have and provide more information about what this test involves and how you can prepare for this.

Please read all information in the 'information for patients attending for lung function tests' document as well as the information included in this document.

What is a bronchodilator response test?

A bronchodilator response test involves a breathing test known as spirometry which requires breathing forcefully into some equipment until you feel empty. This test is also referred to as 'reversibility' as it helps to see whether any narrowing of the airways is reversible. We do this by performing spirometry before and after an inhaled medication known as Salbutamol to see if your airways are responsive to this. This medication works by relaxing the smooth muscles of the airways.

Please note: this test is only performed if necessary and safe to do so. The healthcare professional will explain whether this is required or not at your appointment.

Are there any side effects?

Due to the drug method of action, there are some side effects including:

- Increased heart rate
- Dizziness
- Feeling shaky
- Headaches

Please inform us if you are taking any beta blockers or have an irregular heart rhythm at your appointment as this may affect the test.

How should I prepare for the test?

Please follow all instructions as stated in 'information for patients attending for lung function tests'.

As medication may be given during the appointment, we ask that current inhaled medication is avoided for the specific time frames before the test:

- Short acting beta-2 agonist (e.g. albuterol/salbutamol) – 4 hours
- Short-acting muscarinic antagonist (e.g. ipratropium bromide) – 12 hours
- Long-acting beta-2 agonist (e.g. Formoterol or Salmeterol) – 24 hours
- Ultra long-acting beta-2 agonist (e.g. indacaterol, vilanterol or olodaterol) – 36 hours
- Long-acting muscarinic antagonist – 36-48 hours

If you are feeling breathless please take your inhalers as normal and let the healthcare professional know on arrival what time you used this. If you are unsure about what inhaled medication you are currently using or have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call us using the number on your appointment letter.

Additional sources of information:

[Spirometry and bronchodilator responsiveness testing | Asthma + Lung UK \(asthmaandlung.org.uk\)](https://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk)

United Lincolnshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust has worked with AccessAble to create detailed Access Guides to facilities, wards and departments at our sites.

www.accessable.co.uk/united-lincolnshire-hospitals-nhs-trust

United Lincolnshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please email the Patient Information team at patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk