**Spirometry**

Spirometry is a common test used to assess how well your lungs work by measuring how much air you breathe in, how much you breathe out, and how quickly you breathe out.

Spirometry is used to help to diagnose asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other conditions that affect breathing.

**Oral antibiotics or steroids should not have been taken for 6 weeks prior to testing.**

Ideally you should avoid**:**

* Smoking for 24hrs before
* Alcohol for 4hrs before
* Vigorous activity for 30mins before
* Substantial meal 2hrs before

A spirometry test requires you to breathe into a tSwube attached to a machine called a spirometer. Before you do the test, a nurse will give you specific instructions. In general, you can expect the following during a spirometry test:

* You'll be seated during the test
* A clip will be placed on your nose to keep your nostrils closed
* You will take a deep breath and breathe out as hard as you can for several seconds into the tube. It's important that your lips create a seal around the tube, so that no air leaks out
* You'll need to do the test at least three times to make sure your results are relatively consistent. If there is too much variation among the three outcomes, you may need to repeat the test again. The highest value among three close test results is used as the final result
* The entire process usually takes about 20-30 minutes

Your nurse may give you an inhaled medication to open your lungs (bronchodilator) after the initial round of tests. You'll need to wait 10-15 minutes and then do another set of measurements. Your doctor then can compare the results of the two measurements to see whether the bronchodilator improved your airflow.

If you have any questions regarding this test please contact Practice Nurse Gail Stewart