



*Better  
Together*

Patient information

Six Minute Walk Test

Medical Directorate - Cardio Respiratory  
Department

Your Consultant / Doctor has advised you to have a six minute walk test.

### **What is a six minute walk test?**

This is a test to assess how your lungs, heart and the oxygen in your blood react to exercise.

### **What are the benefits of having a six minute walk test?**

This is to find out if your breathlessness is caused by exercise and to plan how to manage your breathlessness.

### **What are the risks of having a six minute walk test?**

This is a very safe test. However, if you have had a heart attack, a stroke or an operation in the past, please tell the staff before your test.

### **Are there any alternative investigations available?**

There is no alternative way of obtaining the information required from this test.

### **What will happen if I decide not to have the investigation?**

Your level of service will not be affected if you decide not to have the test. However, your doctor/consultant will not be able to obtain the necessary information that would have been gathered from performing the test.

### **The day of your test**

A probe (called a pulse oximeter) is attached to your finger. This measures the amount of oxygen in your blood and your heart rate. We will also need to measure the amount of carbon dioxide that is in the air you breathe out. For this, you will have short tubes placed at the entrance to your nostrils.

These will be attached to a machine while the carbon dioxide you breathe out is measured. These measurements are completely painless. You will also be asked to carry out a simple breathing test something you will have probably done before

You will then be asked to walk up and down a corridor, at your own pace, for a total of six minutes. If, during the six minutes, you need to stop due to symptoms such as breathlessness, tiredness, chest pain etc. you may do so until you feel able to continue and complete the six minutes. You will also be carrying a small lightweight monitor (attached to the probe on your finger) while you are walking in order to continually measure the amount of oxygen in your blood and your heart rate while you walk.

After the six-minute walk, all the measurements made at the beginning of the test will then be repeated in order to show the effects of the exercise you have just done.

## **Going Home**

The staff will monitor you until you have recovered. You will then be allowed to leave the department.

## **Returning to work**

You can return to work straight after your assessment unless the doctor/ consultant tell you otherwise on the day of your test.

## **Further Appointments**

You will get the results of the test at your next clinic appointment.

## **Further Information**

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