6 Minute Walk Test – Information for Patients

This leaflet provides information on a 6 minute walk test. Your doctor has requested that we perform this test to help guide your medical treatment. The 6 minute walk test is a type of exercise test which is used to assess your exercise tolerance. This leaflet describes what to expect when you are booked for a 6 minute walk test.

What is a 6 Minute Walk Test? (6MWT)

It is a low risk test that measures how far you can walk in 6 minutes. The 6 minute walk test differs from other exercise tests in that you can walk at your own pace and a minimal amount of equipment is used.

The test helps measure how well your lungs are working. Doctors commonly request this test to:

- Measure the severity of lung disease
- To see if medication will make your breathing better
- To test your lung function before an operation or investigation

Why do I need this test?

The distance you walk is used as an indicator for your exercise capacity. When multiple tests are done over a period of time, your doctor can see whether your exercise capacity is changing.
This can be used to evaluate any treatment you may have been given or to decide on the best time to plan surgery or treatment.

How is the test carried out?

After arriving in the department you will be taken to a different area of the hospital where the test can be carried out.
Before the start of the test your heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen saturation levels will be measured. You will be asked about leg fatigue and how out of breath you feel and to do this we will use a scale from which you can select a number or description.
You will then be asked to walk for 6 minutes along a flat corridor. If you normally use a walking aid you can use this during the test. After 6 minutes you will be asked to stop. Your heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen saturation levels will be measured again and you will be asked about leg fatigue and how out of breath you feel, again using the scale. This information along with the distance walked will be recorded.
The test may need to be repeated while you wear some oxygen.

Before the test

- Do not eat a heavy meal before the test (a light meal is acceptable)
- Do not wear any tight clothing that may restrict your breathing
- Do not smoke for at least 1 hour
- Do not drink alcohol for at least 4 hours
- Please avoid vigorous exercise for 2 hours prior to testing

Please continue to take all prescribed medication as normal

compassionate care

Please contact the department if you have experienced any of the following:

- Current or a recent chest infection (within the last 2 weeks).
- Recent eye, stomach or chest surgery.
- Heart attack within the last month.
- Attended an Accident and Emergency department in the last 2 to 3 days
- Chest pain on the day of your test.

Important information

- **If you normally use inhalers, please bring your inhalers with you.**
- **If you normally use GTN spray, please bring your spray with you.**
- **Please wear suitable clothing and flat and comfortable shoes.**
- **Please bring your walking aid if required.**
- **If you are on ambulatory oxygen please ensure you bring your oxygen with you.**
- **Please do not wear nail varnish/acrylic nails to the appointment.**
- **Please allow up to an hour for this appointment.**
- **Please note that you will not be given the results on the day of your test.**

Frequently asked questions

Will I experience any discomfort or side effects?
There are no known side effects associated with this test.

When will I be told the results of my test?
You are usually told your results at your next clinic appointment, or a letter may be sent to your GP or the doctor who referred you for the test.

What should I wear when I attend for my test?
You should wear normal comfortable clothing and flat shoes suitable for walking in.

How long will the test take?
The test will take approximately half an hour to complete. The length of the test may vary slightly depending on your oxygen levels during the test.

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).
Telephone: 0800 013 0018 (PALS)
patientadvice@cht.nhs.uk

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Calderdale Royal Hospital
Cardiology Department

Telephone: 01422 224310

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

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برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں.

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم المذكور أعلاه"