

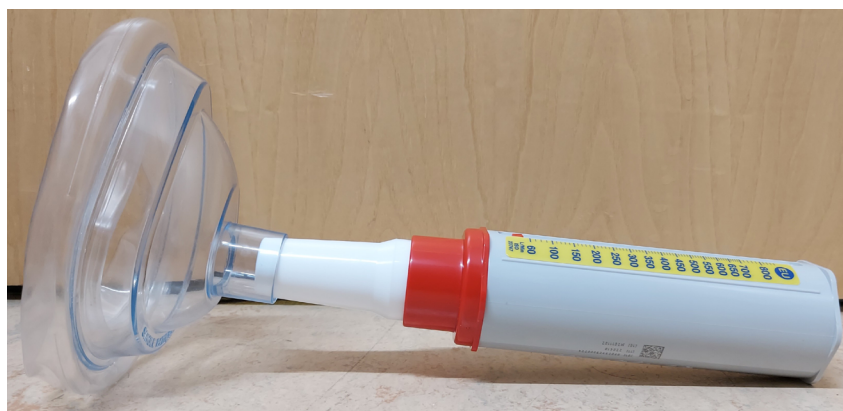
Patient information factsheet

How to perform a peak cough flow test at home

We have given you this factsheet because we have asked you to perform a peak cough flow test at home as part of your respiratory assessment for our ventilation clinic or for your ongoing respiratory management. It explains what a peak cough flow test is, what the test involves and how to perform it safely at home. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of our team.

What is a peak cough flow test?

A peak cough flow test is a simple measurement of how strong your cough is. The test involves coughing as hard as you can into a face mask that is connected to a small handheld device called a peak flow meter.



What is it used for?

A peak cough flow test is used to assess cough strength in people with neuromuscular conditions, such as motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis and myotonic dystrophy.

A peak cough flow test:

- allows you to monitor your cough strength and spot any deterioration quickly
- helps us decide whether you would benefit from additional support with your cough or advice on how to reduce your risk of chest infections and secretion (phlegm) build-ups

What happens during a peak cough flow test?

During your clinic appointment, we will provide you with the necessary equipment and show you how to perform a peak cough flow test. We have also included some instructions on the next page for you to follow at home.

Patient information factsheet

How to perform a peak cough flow test

1. Attach the face mask to the white mouthpiece on the peak flow meter.
2. Pull the red counter on the peak flow meter back as far as it will go to the top (near the face mask).
3. Stand or sit upright (choose what's most comfortable for you and always do it that way).
4. Take a deep breath in.
5. Place the mask securely over your nose and mouth, creating a tight seal.
6. Cough as hard as you can into the mask.
7. Record your score (the number next to the red counter) in the results table below.
8. Do this three times in a row so you get three scores.
9. Detach the face mask from the peak flow meter. Then detach the white mouthpiece from the peak flow meter.
10. Wipe clean the face mask and mouthpiece with a damp cloth or rinse in warm, soapy water. Allow to air dry. Then put all the equipment away in a safe place.

We may ask you to repeat this test again in preparation for your next ventilation clinic appointment.

When should I perform this test?

If you are doing this test as part of your respiratory assessment, or we have asked you to perform this test, you will only need to complete it once (collecting three scores).

If you are monitoring your cough, we recommend repeating this test monthly. Aim to do the test at approximately the same time of day each time.

How should I record my results?

Please use the table below to record your peak cough flow test scores.

Date	First score	Second score	Third score

If you are doing this test as part of your respiratory assessment, or we have asked you to perform this test, please contact us to let us know your test results. If you are due to attend a clinic appointment, please bring your results table with you.

If you are monitoring your cough and notice your results are consistently below 160, or you are beginning to struggle with your cough, please contact us for advice.

If we're unable to answer your call, please leave a message on our answerphone with your name, your test results and your phone number. We will call you back to discuss and advise on follow-up care if needed.

Patient information factsheet

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

The respiratory centre

Telephone: **023 8120 4416**

Useful links

Performing a peak cough flow test video tutorial:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rZm3ktvIYk

For a translation of this document, or a version in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **0800 484 0135** or email patientsupporthub@uhs.nhs.uk

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport