

Respiratory physiology - fractional exhaled nitric oxide test

Patient information sheet

The respiratory physiology department performs various tests that help with the diagnosis and management of patients with breathing problems.

What is a fractional exhaled nitric oxide (FeNO) test?

Your doctor has requested a fractional exhaled nitric oxide (FeNO) test. This measures the level of nitric oxide (NO) in exhaled breath. When your lungs are inflamed, they produce more nitric oxide. The result of this test will show the level of inflammation in your airways. This will help diagnose the type of inflammation you may have, monitor your condition and assess how well any treatment is working.

What does the test involve?

Your test will be carried out by a clinical physiologist.

Please do not worry about performing the test as you will be shown what to do.

The test itself is simple and easy to perform. Sitting comfortably in a chair, first you will be asked to blow out into the room. Then, with your lips tightly sealed around a mouthpiece, you will be instructed to take a deep breath in and then breathe out at a steady rate. The device and the physiologist will be guiding you as to the right rate to breathe out.



The FeNO machine



Performing the test

Preparing for your appointment

It is important to comply with the following pre-test instructions as there are a variety of factors that can impact on the results of this test.

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At least one hour before your appointment time:

- Refrain from drinking hot drinks, caffeine and alcohol.
- Avoid smoking.
- Do not exercise or exert yourself.

At least three hours before your appointment time:

- Avoid eating nitrate rich foods (such as celery, leek, lettuce, spinach, cabbage, beetroot).

You can take your regular medications as normal before the test.

If you have had a recent chest infection, please inform the clinical physiologist.

Risks

The test is safe to do, however due to the nature of the breathing manoeuvres involved, you may feel light-headed and experience coughing.

Any questions

If you have any questions about the test or the department, please do not hesitate to telephone respiratory physiology on 01223 638207.

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