



**Royal Papworth Hospital**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Respiratory Physiology Sweat Test

A patient's guide

## **Introduction**

The Respiratory Physiology department performs various tests, which help in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with breathing problems.

## **What is a Sweat Test?**

**A Sweat Test is a test to confirm the level of salt (sodium and chloride) in the sweat.**

## **What does the test involve?**

The Sweat Test involves attaching two electrodes onto the inside of your forearm, held in place with straps. These electrodes contain a substance that stimulates sweat glands.

These electrodes are connected to a sweat inducer box to stimulate sweat production via a mild electrical stimulation. This feels like 'prickly heat' on the skin where the site is being stimulated. The inducer box will beep when stimulation time is completed. This process takes 5 minutes. The electrodes are then removed and your skin cleaned with water. A small collection disc will then be strapped on to your forearm. This will collect the sweat produced for up to 30 minutes.

### **Preparing for the visit**

If you are having Lung Function Tests performed at the same time as your Sweat Test, you will need to read the information on how to prepare for your Lung Function Tests as well as this information.

There are no restrictions on activity or diet for this test and you may continue taking all your regular medication.

However, you are advised not to apply creams or lotions onto your arms on the day of the test.

### **After the tests**

The stimulation will lead to redness of the skin under the electrodes which may remain for a few hours after the test.

### **Any questions?**

If you have any questions about the test or the department, please do not hesitate to telephone the Respiratory Physiology department on 01223 638815.

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