

HOW TO USE YOUR PFM

1. Sit upright or stand
2. Hold the meter horizontally
3. Put the marker on '0'
4. Take a deep breath in
5. Close your lips around the mouthpiece of the meter
6. Blow into the meter as hard and as fast as you can
7. Check your reading and write your number on the Record Card
8. Reset the PFM markers and repeat 2 more times

KEEPING YOUR METER CLEAN

Make sure your meter stays free of dust and dirt. If dirt gets inside your meter, your results will not be accurate. Keep the PFM in the resealable plastic bag provided.

Peak flow meters are cleaned every few weeks in *Hibitane* or hot soapy water. Since you will only be using your meter for 2 weeks at a time, when you return between readings we will clean your PFM and return it to you before your next reading.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS

There is a lot of information to write in your Record Card. If you have a question or would like someone to review any of the information with you, please contact your physician.

If something happens to your peak flow meter or your Record Card, please contact your physician immediately.

BREATHE OUT TO FIND OUT!



Centre of Applied Health Research

WHAT IS A PEAK FLOW METER (PFM)?

A PFM is just a small plastic tube with a measuring gauge that measures how fast you blow air out of your lungs – your “peak flow”

WHY SHOULD YOU USE A PEAK FLOW METER?

- A PFM enables you to measure what’s happening in your breathing tubes
- Documenting peak flow rates provides you with a record you can show your doctor, respiratory therapist or nurse on your next visit
- It also helps to assess if your treatment is working
- Conducting peak flow monitoring before you return to work and during work will help your doctor determine if you have snow crab occupational asthma

WHAT IS NORMAL?

Peak flow rates vary for each individual and are dependent on:

HEIGHT - the taller you are the higher the rate

AGE – peak flow rates increase as a child grows older, reaching a peak at about 20 years of age and falling steadily after that

SEX - men have higher readings than women

You can work out what your peak flow reading should be, based on how tall you are, how much you weigh and your age.

WHEN DO I USE THE PFM?

Before you go back to work, use the meter for two weeks every morning when you get up, at night before you go to bed, and every 2 hours in between. Record these readings in your Record Card. Someone may call you to check your results and answer any questions you may have about peak flow monitoring.

Once you have completed one week of readings, bring your Record Card to:

Once you have completed the second week of readings, bring your Record Card to:

You do not need to monitor your peak flow again until you have started work.

Once you have been working at the crab plant for two weeks or longer, use your meter throughout the day for another two weeks. Take your reading in the morning when you get up, at night before you go to bed, and during every break you have at work. Try to do your reading every two hours.

Once you have completed one week of readings, bring your Record Card to:

One you have done the second week of reading, bring your Record Card to:

HOW TO RECORD YOUR RESULTS

1. Use your Record Card to log your PFM readings every two hours, if possible
2. Don’t forget to write the time and date every time you record your reading
3. Always record your three readings
4. If you use your bronchodilator (blue puffers), wait 15 minutes and do three more readings. Write these readings in the boxes that are marked with an asterix (*)
5. Every night write down on your record card other symptoms you may have experienced that day
6. Record the number of times you took medications
7. Write anything unusual about your breathing and what you think may have caused it
8. List any activities that you were involved in that day – at work, fishing, riding your bike, etc.

Refer to the example shown in your Record Card