

Sniff Test (Chest Fluoroscopy)

How to prepare and what to expect

A sniff test allows your doctor to see how your diaphragm moves when you breathe. This handout explains how the exam works, how to prepare, what to expect, and how to get your results.

What is a sniff test?

A sniff test is an exam that checks how the *diaphragm* (the muscle that controls breathing) moves when you breathe normally and when you inhale quickly. The test uses a *fluoroscope*, a special X-ray machine that allows your doctor to see live images of the inside of your body. A sniff test is also called *chest fluoroscopy*.

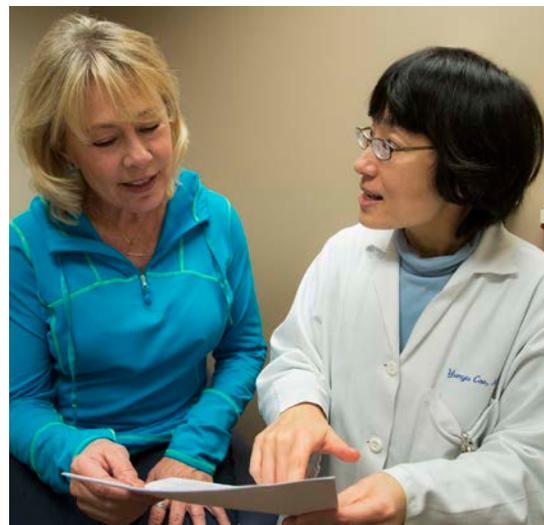
The diaphragm normally moves down when you inhale, and up when you exhale. Both the right and left sides of the diaphragm should move in the same direction at the same time. A sniff test shows if there are problems with the *phrenic* nerve, which controls movement of the diaphragm.

How do I prepare?

You do not need to prepare in any special way for this exam.

How is the exam done?

- You will change into a gown and remove any jewelry.
- During the test, we will ask you to “sniff” (quickly breathe in through your nose).
- Small amounts of X-rays will pass through your body while you are sniffing, creating images of your diaphragm.
- The radiologist will watch these images to see how your diaphragm moves.
- The sniff test takes about 15 minutes.



Talk with your referring provider to get the results of your sniff test.

What will I feel during the exam?

A sniff test should not cause any pain or discomfort.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

A *radiologist* is a doctor who is skilled in reading radiology exams. A radiologist who is trained to interpret sniff tests will review your X-rays and send a report to your primary care or referring provider.

The radiologist will talk with you briefly about your X-ray images, but your own provider will give you the full results of your exam. You may also read your results on your eCare Results page. If you need copies of your images on disc, call 206.598.6206.

You and your provider will decide the next step, such as treatment for a problem, as needed.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

- UWMC Imaging Services: 206.598.6200
- HMC Imaging Services: 206.744.3105