Dear ________________,

You or your child has been scheduled for a Cardiopulmonary Exercise Test on _________ at_______ AM/PM.

**Location:**

NewYork-Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children’s Hospital
Pediatric Cardiopulmonary Exercise Lab
Pediatric Pulmonary Division
3959 Broadway at 165th Street, 7th Floor Central, Room 711 & 712
New York, NY

**What is it?**

A cardiopulmonary exercise test measures how well your heart and lungs work while you exercise. It helps your doctor understand how much exercise your heart and lungs can handle (your functional capacity) and measures your heart rhythm, rate, blood pressure, and breathing capacity during exercise. This test may be ordered for people with shortness of breath, chest discomfort, lack of energy, low blood oxygen levels, known heart or lung problems, or before an organ transplant.

**Why is it done?**

The test is done to find out how well your heart pumps blood and oxygen to your muscles, how you breathe during exercise, how well your current medicines are working, and to set a safe level of exercise for you.

**What do I need to do to prepare?**

- Your doctor may want you to stop certain medications before the test. **Please check with your doctor about this.**
- Do not eat or drink anything that has caffeine (tea, coffee, chocolate, soda) or alcohol for at least 12 hours (24 hours if possible) before your test.
- Do not exercise for 24 hours before your test.

**On the day of the test:**

**Do not eat, drink or smoke two hours before your test.** You may have water. Take your usual medicines unless told otherwise by your doctor. Bring a list of your medicines with you. If you use inhalers, bring the inhalers with you.

Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes (T-shirt, shorts, sweats) and **sneakers. All footwear should completely surround the foot; backless shoes should not be worn.** Do not wear
lipstick, nail polish, perfume, or cologne. Remove all lower ear (ear lobe) earrings, tongue rings, and nose rings. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum.

You must bring a signed authorization form (a requisition, pre-certification form, etc.) from your doctor and authorization from your health insurance plan if it is required by your plan. Bring your health insurance cards and the completed Medical History Questionnaire with you.

Do I need to check in anywhere before the test?

Yes. Before arriving at our offices you MUST first stop at the Admitting Cashier, which is located on the ground floor of Morgan Stanley Children’s Hospital. The attached requisition form must be given to the cashier and an insurance confirmation number will be written on the requisition at that time. We will not see patients who do not have insurance confirmations on their requisitions.

In order to avoid a delay, please arrive one half hour earlier then the scheduled time of your test in order to allow for time at the Admitting Cashiers Office. We cannot guarantee that you will be seen if you are late to your scheduled appointment in the exercise lab.

What happens before the test begins?

To make sure you are able to have the test, our staff physician will examine you and you will be asked questions about your past and present health. The test will be explained to you and your questions will be answered. We will tell you about the equipment and show you how to use it.

How is the test done?

Three breathing tests are done to measure your baseline lung function. After the breathing tests are completed, small adhesive pads called electrodes are placed on your chest and attached to an electrocardiogram (ECG) machine. A pulse oximeter (a small plastic clip) is put on your ear to monitor oxygen levels in your blood. Another clip is placed on your nose to keep air from leaking out during exercise. A mouthpiece is placed between your lips and teeth to monitor the air that is expired. Finally, a blood pressure cuff is placed on your arm so that pressures can be monitored during the test.

You will pedal on a stationary bike or walk on a treadmill while you breathe through the mouthpiece into the monitor. As you pedal we slowly and steadily increase the resistance to make you work harder. If you are on the treadmill, the speed and the incline are gradually increased to make it harder.

While you exercise, we measure the amount of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the air you exhale (breathe out). Your heart rate and rhythm, and blood pressure are recorded and you are constantly monitored during the test.

We closely watch you for any complications. Emergency equipment and trained staff are on hand to care for you if complications occur. If you have chest discomfort, headache, nausea, anxiety, dizziness, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, or tired legs, please tell us.

There are no needles or blood tests.
What else do I need to know?

Total test time takes about one-and-a-half hours from start to finish. You will exercise anywhere from 12-15 minutes. When the exercise portion is finished, your blood pressure and ECG will be monitored while you rest for 10 minutes.

Test results are read within one week of the test date. Any serious matter will be reported to your doctor immediately. You may receive the results at your next visit, or sooner if necessary. You may have sore, stiff muscles for one or two days after the test.

What should I report to the doctor?

Call your doctor or go to the emergency room if you have:

- Chest pain/discomfort
- Palpitations
- Increased shortness of breath
- Dizziness, nausea, vomiting

If you have any questions, please call your doctor or call us at 212-305-5122.

This resource provides brief, general information about this healthcare topic. It does not take the place of specific instructions you receive from your healthcare provider. For answers to other questions, please consult your physician or other healthcare provider.