INFORMATION PACK

Cardiopulmonary Exercise Testing

Cancer Fatigue SERVICES

Medical Disclaimer

The information contained in this brochure is for educational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease or medical condition.

The materials provided do not replace the advice of a physician and should not be used as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you have or suspect you have a medical problem, promptly contact your physician. Do not ignore or delay seeking professional medical advice because of something you have read in this education package.

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Why do I need this test?

There are **TWO MAJOR REASONS** we recommend CPETs for people living with, or trying to prevent, **cancer-related fatigue:**

REASON 1: Better understanding your fatigue

Cancer & its treatments can damage & disrupt the function of organs & systems that support energy production in your body. However, measuring these organs & systems at rest does not help us understand what limits your ability to work, play, & care for yourself.

CPETs are the **gold standard** for measuring organs & systems **'under stress'**. This means CPETs give us the best information to understand how well or poorly these organs & systems work together to produce the energy you need to keep up with & enjoy life.

REASON 2: Optimizing your fatigue treatment

Exercise-based rehabilitation is the single most effective treatment for cancer-related fatigue.

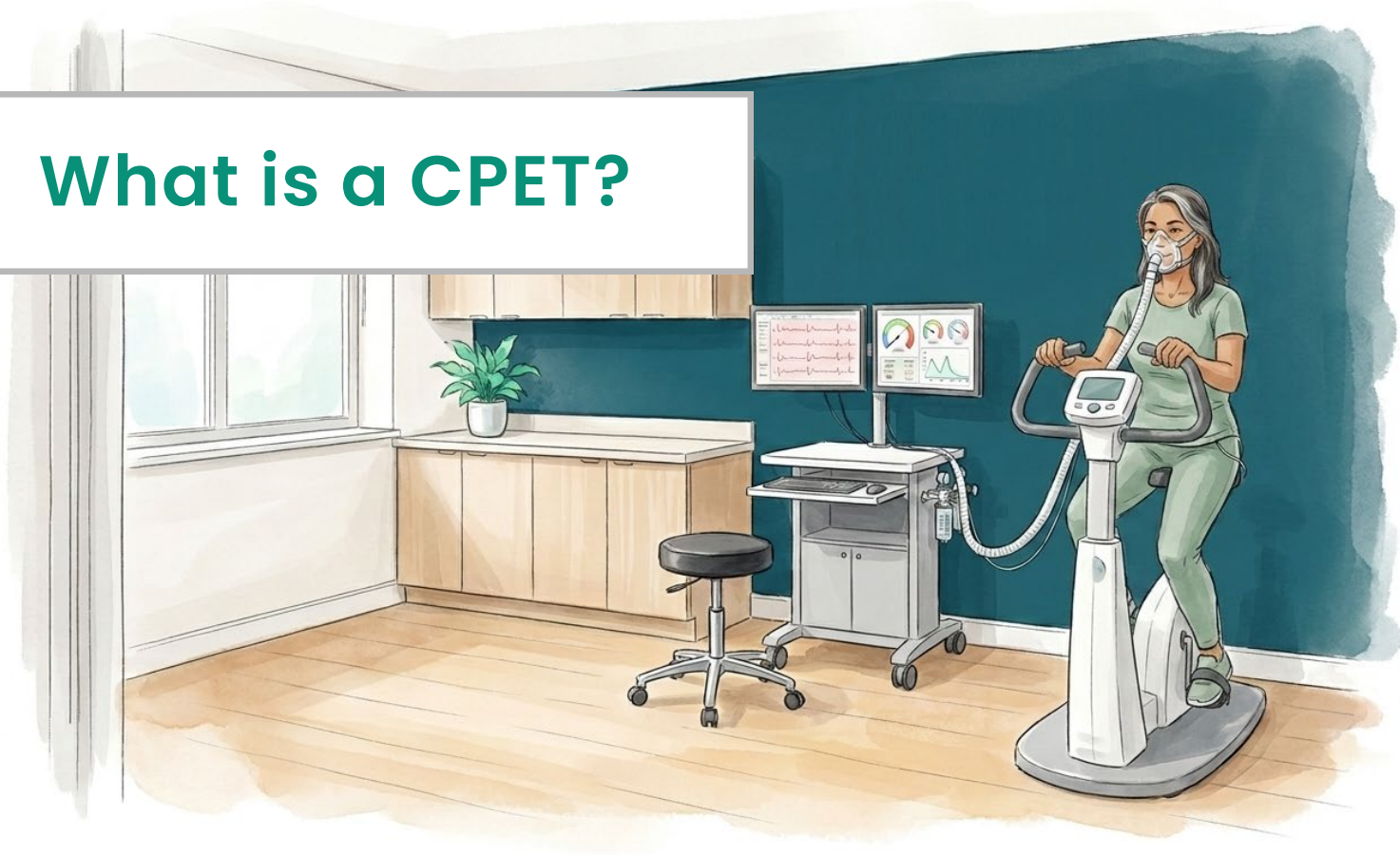
It can seem surprising, but it is well supported. Exercise is the only intervention the Oncology Nursing Society currently recommends for practice for cancer-related fatigue.

CPETs serve two purposes that support your rehabilitation.

First, CPETs are used in medical & research settings to confirm whether exercise is safe for people living with chronic health conditions (e.g. heart disease, cancer).

Second, CPETs measure aerobic fitness (the maximum amount of effort/work people can do when exercising), which is essential for creating personalized exercise plans that are safe, well-tolerated & effective.

What is a CPET?



A cardiopulmonary exercise test (CPET) measures how well your lungs, heart, blood, & muscles work, & work together, to intake, transport, & use oxygen to create energy during exercise. The test starts with pedaling on a stationary exercise bike against no resistance & gets more difficult over time. During the test you will wear devices that measure & record:

- how much oxygen your body uses
- your heart rate
- your blood pressure
- your breathing
- your oxygen saturation

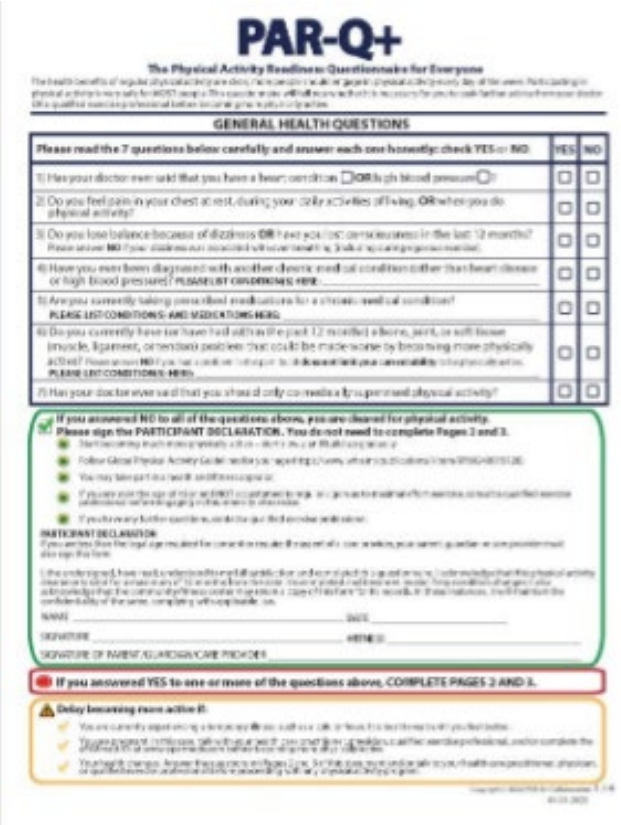
Important: This test shows our team how your body produces energy during exercise. We use what we learn to understand the unique causes of your fatigue & to prepare your care plan.

Safety First: CPET Pre-screening

CPETs are safe for most people.

However, **we do not take any chances with your health & wellbeing**. Before the test, you will complete a questionnaire about your health history & current health status.

Your responses will help us determine if you need to seek further advice from a physician before your CPET.



PAR-Q+

The Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire for Everyone

GENERAL HEALTH QUESTIONS

Please read the 7 questions below carefully and answer each one honestly: check YES or NO.	YES	NO
1) Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition OR high blood pressure?	☐	☐
2) Do you feel pain in your chest at rest, during your daily activities of living, OR when you do physical activity?	☐	☐
3) Do you lose balance because of dizziness OR have you lost consciousness in the last 12 months?	☐	☐
4) Have you ever been diagnosed with another chronic medical condition (other than heart disease or high blood pressure)? PLEASE LIST CONDITIONS HERE:	☐	☐
5) Are you currently taking prescribed medications for a chronic medical condition? PLEASE LIST CONDITIONS AND MEDICATIONS HERE:	☐	☐
6) Do you currently have or have had within the past 12 months a bone, joint, or soft tissue (muscle, ligament, or tendon) problem that could be made worse by becoming more physically active? PLEASE LIST CONDITIONS HERE:	☐	☐
7) Has your doctor ever said that you should only participate in medically supervised physical activity?	☐	☐

If you answered NO to all of the questions above, you are cleared for physical activity.
Please sign the PARTICIPANT DECLARATION. You do not need to complete Pages 2 and 3.

PARTICIPANT DECLARATION

If you answered YES to one or more of the questions above, COMPLETE PAGES 2 AND 3.

Delay becoming more active if:

ePARmed-X+Online

ePARmed-X+ Physician Clearance Follow-Up

This form is separated into three main sections:

A) Background information regarding the PAR-Q+ and ePARmed-X+ clearance process.
B) A brief history and demographic information regarding the participant, and
C) The physician's recommendations regarding the participant becoming more physically active.

At the end of this process, the participant is recommended to take this signed clearance form to a qualified exercise professional or other healthcare professional (as recommended in the ePARmed-X+) before becoming more physically active or engaging in a fitness appraisal.

A BACKGROUND INFORMATION REGARDING THE PAR-Q+ AND ePARmed-X+ CLEARANCE PROCESS

The ePARmed-X+ is an easy to follow interactive program (www.eparmedx.com) that can be used to determine an individual's readiness for increased physical activity participation or a fitness appraisal. The ePARmed-X+ supplements the paper and online versions of the Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire for Everyone (PAR-Q+).

Individuals who use the ePARmed-X+ have had a positive response to the PAR-Q+, or have been directed to the online program by a qualified exercise professional or another healthcare professional, owing to his/her current medical condition. At the end of the ePARmed-X+, it is possible that the participant is advised to consult a physician to discuss the various options regarding becoming more physically active. In this instance, the participant will be required to receive medical clearance for physical activity from a physician. Until this medical clearance is received, the participant is restricted to low intensity physical activity participation.

This document serves to assist both the participant and physician in the physical activity clearance process.

B PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME: _____ SEX ☐ M or ☐ F

ADDRESS: _____ BIRTHDATE (mm/dd/yy): _____

TELEPHONE: _____ HEALTH/MEDICAL NUMBER: _____

REASON FOR REFERRAL (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY):

☐ QUALIFIED EXERCISE PROFESSIONAL REFERRAL
☐ HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL REFERRAL
☐ ePARmed-X+ RECOMMENDATION

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Who should NOT do a CPET?

We do not recommend doing a CPET if you:

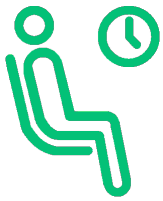
- have a chronic medical condition that is not managed or well controlled, like heart failure or diabetes
- have uncontrolled heart rhythm or heart rate problems
- have a physical condition or injury that prevents you from pedaling a stationary exercise bike
- have or are recovering from a sudden illness like COVID-19, a cold or the flu
- had a heart attack or device implant in the last 30 days
- have very high blood pressure &/or very low blood oxygen levels at rest

Please call us before your appointment if you have had a recent change in your health that may affect your ability to exercise, including if you have or are recovering from a sudden illness or injury.

How do I prepare for a CPET?

If you read nothing else on this page:
Do not exercise, smoke, or vape beforehand, and take your medicines as you normally would.

Activities Before Your Test



Do not exercise. You need to be well rested for the best results. One of the main things the test measures is how hard you can work; &, exercising before your test may alter how well you tolerate & perform during the test.

Do not smoke or vape. Smoking or vaping causes your airways to narrow & increases the level of carbon monoxide in your blood. Both of these effects reduce oxygen delivery to your muscles & decrease your performance during the exercise test.

Take your medication(s) as you normally would.

Pre-Test Food & Drink Instructions

Time-Based Food & Drink Restrictions

< 4 hours	**Do not eat a large meal**
2-4 hours	**Only eat a small meal** (e.g. a 1/2 sandwich & some fruit)
1-2 hours	**Only eat a snack** (e.g. yoghurt, fruit or granola bar)
< 1 hour	**Only drink liquids** (e.g. smoothies, fruit juice)
Day of test	**Do not drink alcohol or ingest any caffeine** (e.g. coffee, tea, soda or supplements)

Caffeine is a stimulant that can change how your heart works & may impact the accuracy of your test.

IMPORTANT:
What to bring to the test?

It is **important to remember** to bring the following items to your CPET:

- list of your medications
- comfortable running shoes
- T-shirt or tank top (loose fitting preferred)
- shorts or comfortable pants you can exercise in
- water bottle

What happens before the test?

Before your test...

1. You arrive & check in at reception (Suite 501, 2 Sheppard Avenue East)
2. If you are not wearing them, you can change into your exercise clothes.
3. We explain the test & give you time to ask questions.
4. You read & sign a consent form before the test begins.

What happens during the test?

During your test...

1. We do a lung function test (called spirometry) to measure how well you breathe & how well your lungs work at rest. The main things this test measures are the amount of air that enters & exits your lungs during a single maximal breath.

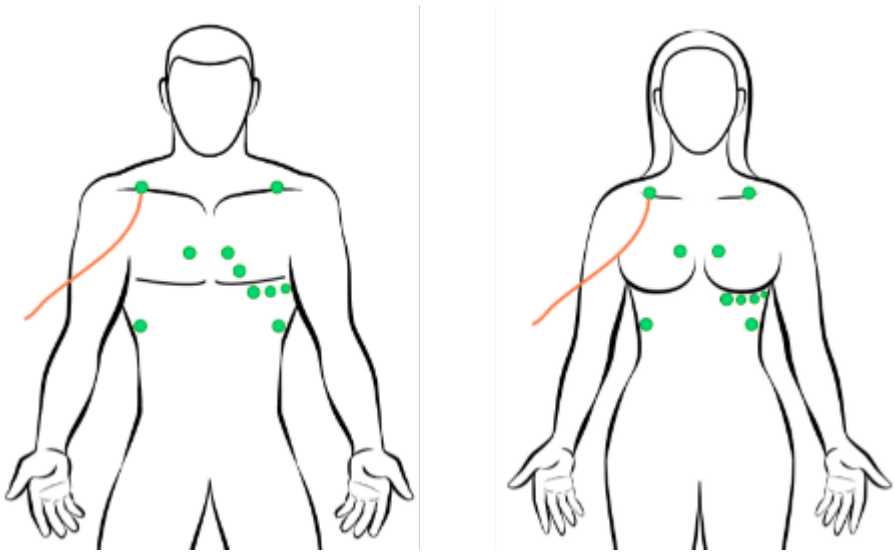
During your test...

2. We place electrocardiogram electrodes (stickers attached to wires; see picture) on the skin of your chest. Before placing the electrodes, we:

    i. use an electric clipper/shaver to remove body hair where the electrodes need to go (if needed);

    ii. remove skin oils using alcohol wipes; &.

    iii. remove any dead skin with a fine sandpaper.



Where the ECG stickers are placed

3. We help you put on other equipment you need to wear during the test, including:

    i. a cuff on your upper arm to measure your blood pressure;

ii. a pulse oximeter on your finger to measure how how much oxygen is in your blood; &,

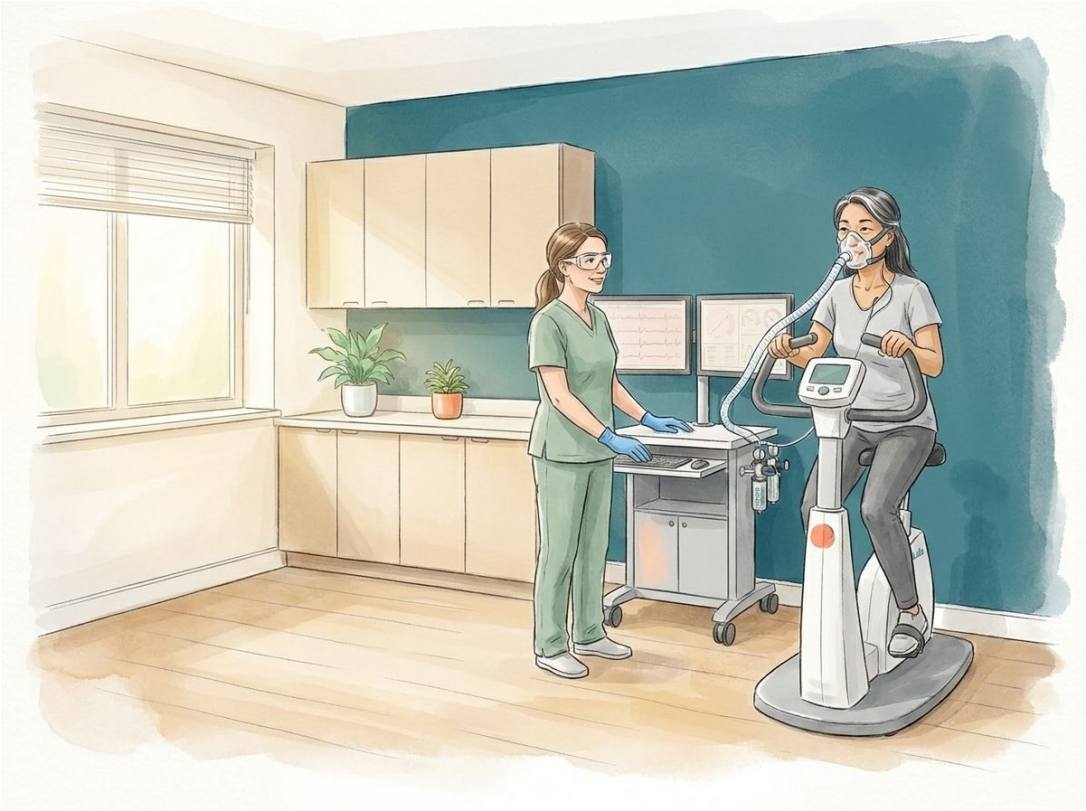
iii. a mask covering your nose & mouth that is connected to a breathing tube in your mouth to measure how deep & fast you breathe, how much oxygen you breathe in, & how much carbon dioxide you breathe out.

4. We monitor your heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen level, & breathing for 2 to 3 minutes while you are comfortably seated & resting. We use these resting measures to confirm it is safe for you to start the test.

5. We explain how the exercise test will proceed, the reasons why the test should stop, how to communicate with us during the test, & we answer your questions.

6. You warm up for 2 minutes by pedaling the bike with no resistance.

7. The test starts & typically lasts 8 to 12 minutes (about 16 to 21 minutes including the 2-minute warm-up & the 6-minute Cool down). During the test we gradually increase the bike resistance, slowly making it more & more difficult to pedal. We encourage you to keep going & remind you how to stop the test when you need to.



8. When you can no longer continue to pedal the bike, we turn off the resistance & you keep pedaling until your heart rate & breathing return closer to what they were while you were resting.

9. We remove the test equipment & have you rest in a chair for a few minutes. You can drink water & relax while we monitor your heart rate & blood pressure for at least 5 minutes.

How long does the test take?

The appointment is booked for an hour. However, you will only be exercising for about 15 to 20 minutes - 8 to 12 minutes of work, plus a 2-minute warm-up & a 5-minute cool down.

Are there any side effects or risks?

The side effects or risks of taking part in the test are small, and serious problems are rare. The health questionnaire you complete before the test (see pages 7 and 8) helps us make sure the test is safe for you.

Please ask your doctor about any unexpected & sometimes serious side effects that are possible.

The clinical team doing your exercise test will watch you closely to see if you start experiencing symptoms or side effects. Many side effects go away shortly after exercise testing is stopped, but in rare cases side effects can be serious & last for some time after the test.

Risks & side effects of the exercise test include:

Likely

- dry mouth
- breathlessness
- muscle soreness
- fatigue

Less likely

- light-headedness
- muscle or joint injury
- muscle cramps or strain

Rarely

- heart rhythm problems or heart attack
- abnormal blood pressure
- fainting
- nausea

What problems should I watch for after the test?

It is very rare that a CPET test would cause any health problems once you go home.

If you have shortness of breath or trouble breathing, heart rhythm disturbances, chest pain, or fainting, please call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest hospital emergency department.

When will I get my test results?

Ask our Clinical Care team member when they expect the results to be ready & when you can discuss them with your **Cancer Fatigue Services** physician.

Content adapted from:

1. American Thoracic Society Patient Education Information Series - Cardiopulmonary Exercise Testing (CPET)
2. University Health Network Patient Education Pack - Cardiopulmonary Exercise Test (CPET) [Authors: Adams, S., Walker, M., & Lee., L.]

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CFS CPET Information Pack
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