

 Information regarding temporary clinic changes during COVID-19 pandemic.

 Other UMHS Sites



Quick Links

Find a Doctor

Conditions & Treatments

Locations

Patient & Visitor Guide

Support Services

Home » Forced Expiratory Volume and Forced Vital Capacity

Health Library

Topic Overview

Related Information

Credits

Forced Expiratory Volume and Forced Vital Capacity

Topic Overview

Forced expiratory volume (FEV) measures how much air a person can exhale during a forced breath. The amount of air exhaled may be measured during the first (FEV1), second (FEV2), and/or third seconds (FEV3) of the forced breath.

Forced vital capacity (FVC) is the total amount of air exhaled during the FEV test.

Forced expiratory volume and forced [vital capacity](#) are lung function tests that are measured during [spirometry](#). Forced expiratory volume is the most important measurement of lung function. It is used to:

- Diagnose obstructive lung diseases such as [asthma](#) and [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\)](#). A person who has asthma or COPD has a lower FEV1 result than a healthy person.
- See how well medicines used to improve breathing are working.

- Check if lung disease is getting worse. Decreases in the FEV1 value may mean the lung disease is getting worse.

Related Information

- [Lung Function Tests](#)

[Related Information »](#)

Current as of: September 5, 2018

Author: [Healthwise Staff](#)

Medical Review: E. Gregory Thompson MD - Internal Medicine & Adam Husney MD - Family Medicine & Elizabeth T. Russo MD - Internal Medicine



This information does not replace the advice of a doctor. Healthwise, Incorporated, disclaims any warranty or liability for your use of this information. Your use of this information means that you agree to the [Terms of Use](#). Learn [how we develop our content](#).

To learn more about Healthwise, visit [Healthwise.org](#).

© 1995-2019 Healthwise, Incorporated. Healthwise, Healthwise for every health decision, and the Healthwise logo are trademarks of Healthwise, Incorporated.

NOTICE: This health information was not created by the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) and may not necessarily reflect specific UMHS practices. For medical advice relating to your personal condition, please consult your doctor. [Complete disclaimer](#)

Can't find what you're looking for?

[Click here for help.](#)

Dial 911 for emergencies

Quick Links

[MyUofMHealth.org](#)

[Appointment Information](#)

[Make a Gift](#)

[Michigan Medicine](#)

[Careers](#)

[Volunteer](#)

[Insurance](#)

Connect

 [Facebook](#)

 [Twitter](#)

 [Instagram](#)

 [YouTube](#)

 [Pinterest](#)

 [Michigan Health](#)