

# Capnography

## Capnography

For your safety, your health care team will measure your breathing during and after your surgery or if you take certain medicines. This is important because anesthesia or prescription pain medicine can slow down your breathing and heart rate to levels that are too low.

This process is known as capnography. It measures:

- the amount of carbon dioxide in your breathe when you breathe out (exhale)
- the number of breaths you take each minute (respiration rate).

Members of your health care team will also check:

- how fast your heart is beating (pulse rate)
- the amount of oxygen in your blood (oxygen saturation).

## How it Works

A tube under your nose sends samples of the breath you exhale to the monitor where the carbon dioxide level is measured. If your breathing is too shallow or slow, an alarm will sound. The alarm is a set of beeps.

You receive oxygen through small pin holes in the tube if needed for your recovery.

The nurse will let you know if it's OK to remove the tube under your nose if you are not sleeping or napping.

## What to Do if You Hear the Alarm

The alarm may wake you up. This will remind you to take deeper breaths. Your nurse will come in and check on you.

## How Long You Will Need to Be Checked

Your breathing and heart rate are measured while you sleep because medicines that make you sleepy or that block pain can affect your breathing and heart rate.

You will be checked until your doctor no longer thinks you are at risk for shallow or slow breathing. This is usually the morning after the procedure.



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