

# Appendix D

## Six-Minute Walk Test Protocol (6MWT)

The 6MWT should be performed indoors, along a long, flat, straight, enclosed corridor with a hard surface that is seldom traveled. The walking course must be 30 m in length. A 100 ft (30.4 m) hallway is, therefore, required. The length of the corridor should be marked every 3 m. The turnaround points should be marked with a cone (such as an orange traffic cone). A starting line, which marks the beginning and end of each 60 m lap, should be marked on the floor using brightly colored tape.

### Patient Preparation

1. Comfortable clothing should be worn.
2. Appropriate shoes for walking should be worn.
3. Patients should use their usual walking aids during the test (e.g., cane, walker).
4. The patient's usual medical regimen should be continued.
5. A light meal is acceptable before early morning or early afternoon tests.
6. Patients should not have exercised vigorously within 2 hours of beginning the test.

### Measurements

Repeat testing should be performed about the same time of day.

Set the lap counter to zero and the timer to 6 minutes. Assemble all necessary equipment (lap counter, timer, clipboard, worksheet) and move to the starting point.

Instruct the patient as follows:

*"The object of this test is to walk as far as possible for 6 minutes. You will walk back and forth in this hallway. Six minutes is a long time to walk, so you will be exerting yourself. You will probably get out of breath or become exhausted. You are permitted*

*to slow down, to stop, and to rest as necessary. You may lean against the wall while resting, but resume walking as soon as you are able. You will be walking back and forth around the cones. You should pivot briskly around the cones and continue back the other way without hesitation. Now I'm going to show you. Please watch the way I turn without hesitation."*

Demonstrate by walking one lap yourself. Walk and pivot around a cone briskly.

*"Are you ready to do that? I am going to use this counter to keep track of the number of laps you complete. I will click it each time you turn around at this starting line. Remember that the object is to walk AS FAR AS POSSIBLE for 6 minutes, but don't run or jog. Start now or whenever you are ready."*

- Position the patient at the starting line. You should also stand near the starting line during the test. Do not walk with the patient. As soon as the patient starts to walk, start the timer. Do not talk to anyone during the walk. Use an even tone of voice when using the standard phrases of encouragement.
- Watch the patient. Do not get distracted and lose count of the laps. Each time the participant returns to the starting line, click the lap counter once (or mark the lap on the worksheet). Let the participant see you do it. Exaggerate the click using body language, like using a stopwatch at a race.
- During the test, after the first minute, tell the patient the following (in even tones): *"You are doing well. You have 5 minutes to go."*
- When the timer shows 4 minutes remaining, tell the patient the following: *"Keep up the good work. You have 4 minutes to go."*
- When the timer shows 3 minutes remaining, tell the patient the following: *"You are doing well. You are halfway done."*

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- When the timer shows 2 minutes remaining, tell the patient the following: *“Keep up the good work. You have only 2 minutes left.”*
- When the timer shows only 1 minute remaining, tell the patient: *“You are doing well. You have only 1 minute to go.”*
- Do not use other words of encouragement (or body language to speed up).

If the patient stops walking during the test and needs a rest, say this: *“You can lean against the wall if you would like; then continue walking whenever you feel able.”* Do not stop the timer. If the patient stops before the 6 minutes are up and refuses to continue (or you decide that the patient should not continue), wheel the chair over for the patient

to sit on, discontinue the walk, and note on the worksheet the distance, the time stopped, and the reason for stopping prematurely.

When the timer is 15 seconds from completion, say this: *“In a moment I’m going to tell you to stop. When I do, just stop right where you are and I will come to you.”*

When the timer rings (or buzzes), say this: *“Stop!”* Walk over to the patient. Consider taking the chair if the patient looks exhausted. Mark the spot where the patient stopped by placing a beanbag or a piece of tape on the floor. Record the number of laps from the counter (or tick marks on the worksheet), that is, the total distance walked in 6 minutes.