

# EXHALE ACADEMY CSE CHEAT SHEET #19

## WHAT TEST SHOULD I PICK?

### ABG

Pick when you need acid-base, oxygenation, or ventilation data.

- Respiratory failure.
- Severe distress.
- Ventilator changes.
- COPD/asthma/ARDS/CHF/overdose.

### CHEST X-RAY

Pick when lung structure, tube placement, infiltrates, or trauma patterns matter.

- Pneumonia, atelectasis, pneumothorax.
- ARDS/CHF patterns.
- Tube/line placement.
- Chest trauma or post-op pulmonary changes.

### LABS/CULTURES

Pick labs that match the suspected cause.

- CBC/WBC: infection or bleeding.
- Hb/Hct: hemothorax/blood loss.
- Electrolytes: arrhythmia/metabolic issues.
- Sputum culture: infection with secretions/fever.
- Co-oximetry: carbon monoxide exposure.

### SPECIAL TESTS

- MIP/NIF + VC: neuromuscular weakness/weaning.
- V/Q scan or CT angiography concept: pulmonary embolism.
- Bronchoscopy: foreign body, airway evaluation, secretion removal.
- ICP/GCS: head trauma/neuro status.
- Sweat chloride: cystic fibrosis.

### SKIP WHEN

- Test is unrelated to the patient problem.
- Patient is unstable and needs immediate action.
- Result would not change treatment.
- A safer bedside option comes first.

### EXHALE MEMORY LINE

Pick tests that answer one question: Will this change the next safest action?