



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Carbon Monoxide Testing as Part of Your Tobacco Treatment Program

This information describes how to use a carbon monoxide testing device to help you quit smoking. It also explains why breath carbon monoxide testing can help you be successful in the Tobacco Treatment Program at Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK).

You will be taking breath tests using a device called the iCOquit[®] Smokerlyzer[®]. It measures the level of carbon monoxide in your breath when you breathe out.

Why it's important to test for carbon monoxide

A testing device gives you important feedback about your body. We often measure blood pressure, temperature, and oxygen to learn more about what's happening inside the body.

The iCOquit[®] device measures carbon monoxide (CO) from cigarettes. It also measures CO from other tobacco products that can burn, such as cigars. This measurement is in parts per million (ppm). Carbon monoxide is a major cause of the shortness of breath and low energy many tobacco users feel.

Carbon monoxide is a toxic gas that blocks some oxygen from getting into your red blood cells. The device can help you get more in tune with your body by tracking carbon monoxide caused by smoking.

Why testing helps you quit if you smoke

The measurement you see after using the device tells you how much carbon monoxide is in your body. That information can motivate you and help you quit. That's because it measures your progress during tobacco treatment.

You will likely see your carbon monoxide level change over time. Some people say the device makes them feel more responsible and in control. It gives them the power to make changes as they work on quitting for good. Along with counseling, the device helps support and motivate you during treatment.

As carbon monoxide levels drop, you may see other ways quitting helps you. You may be able to breathe more easily and have more energy. Your MSK tobacco treatment expert will talk with you about how your measurements can help you quit smoking.

Download the MyMSK app

MSK offers our patients and caregivers a patient portal, MyMSK. The iCOquit® device works with MyMSK to take your carbon monoxide measurements. **You must download MyMSK before you start taking measurements.** Please read this [information about downloading and using MyMSK](#).

Instructions for connecting the iCOquit® device to MyMSK

After you download the MyMSK app to your mobile device, follow these steps to connect your iCOquit® device to MyMSK.

1. Turn on Bluetooth on your mobile device. First, open **Settings** on your Apple or Android device. Look for the Bluetooth logo:



The Bluetooth
logo

2. Enter your MyMSK username and password. Log in to MyMSK (see Figure 1).

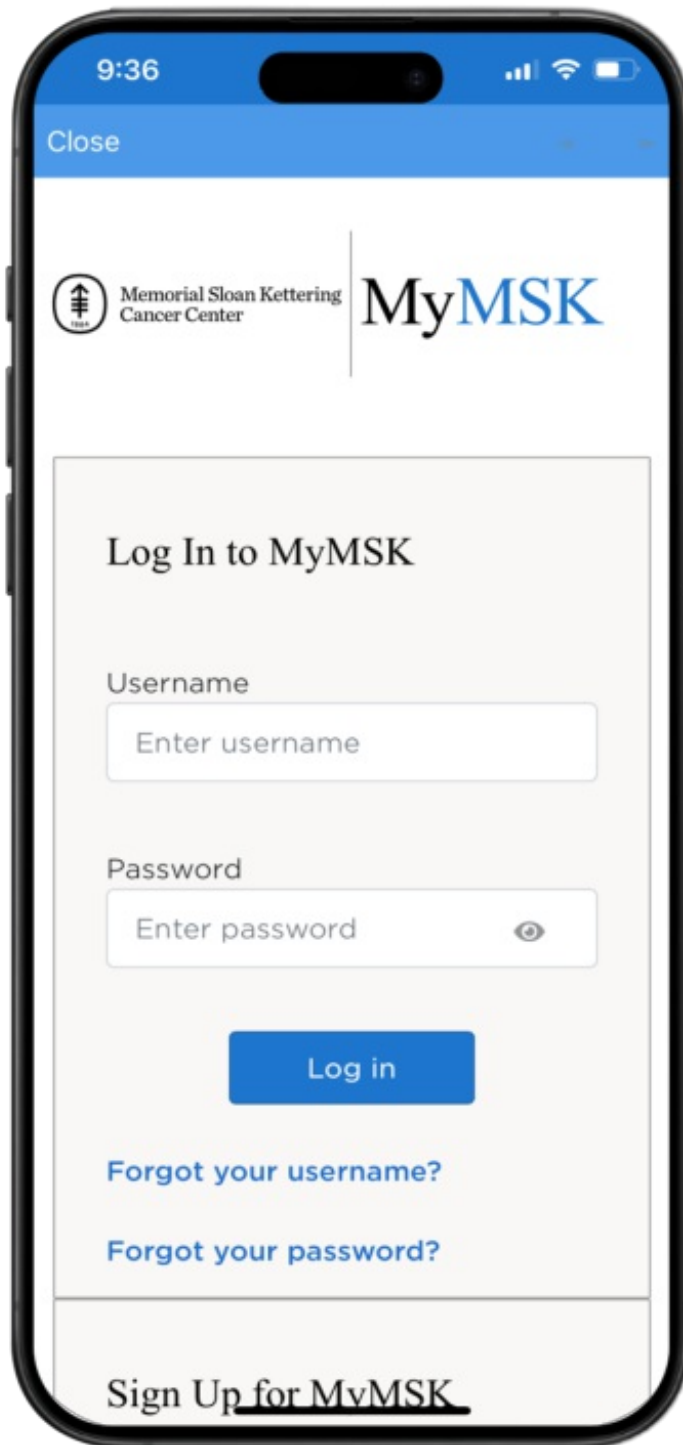


Figure 1. The login screen.

3. You will see the MyMSK home screen. On the bottom right, click on **Menu** (see Figure 2).

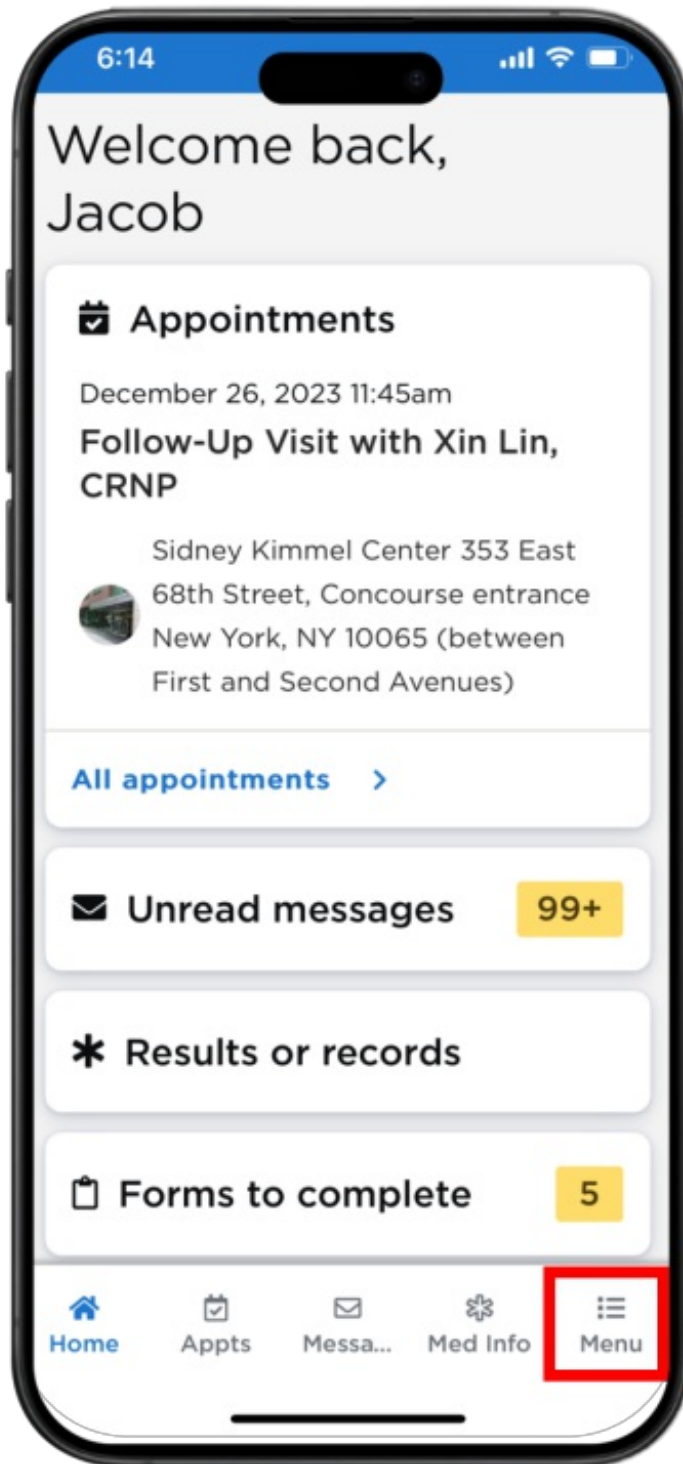


Figure 2. The menu button on the bottom right.

4. Next, you will see a screen with a list of options. Select **Remote Monitoring** (see Figure 3).

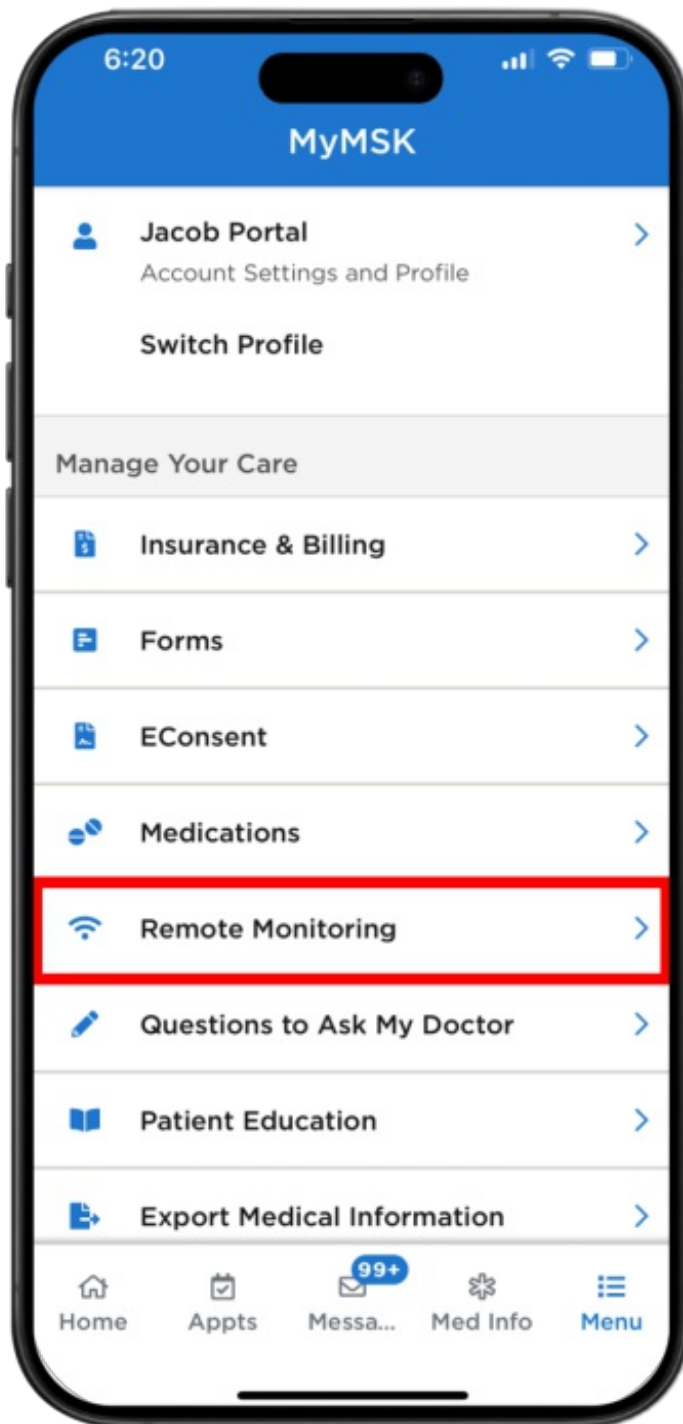


Figure 3. Select Remote Monitoring.

5. Look for the **Carbon Monoxide Monitor section**. There will be a list of devices. Select **Bedfont Scientific** (see Figure 4).

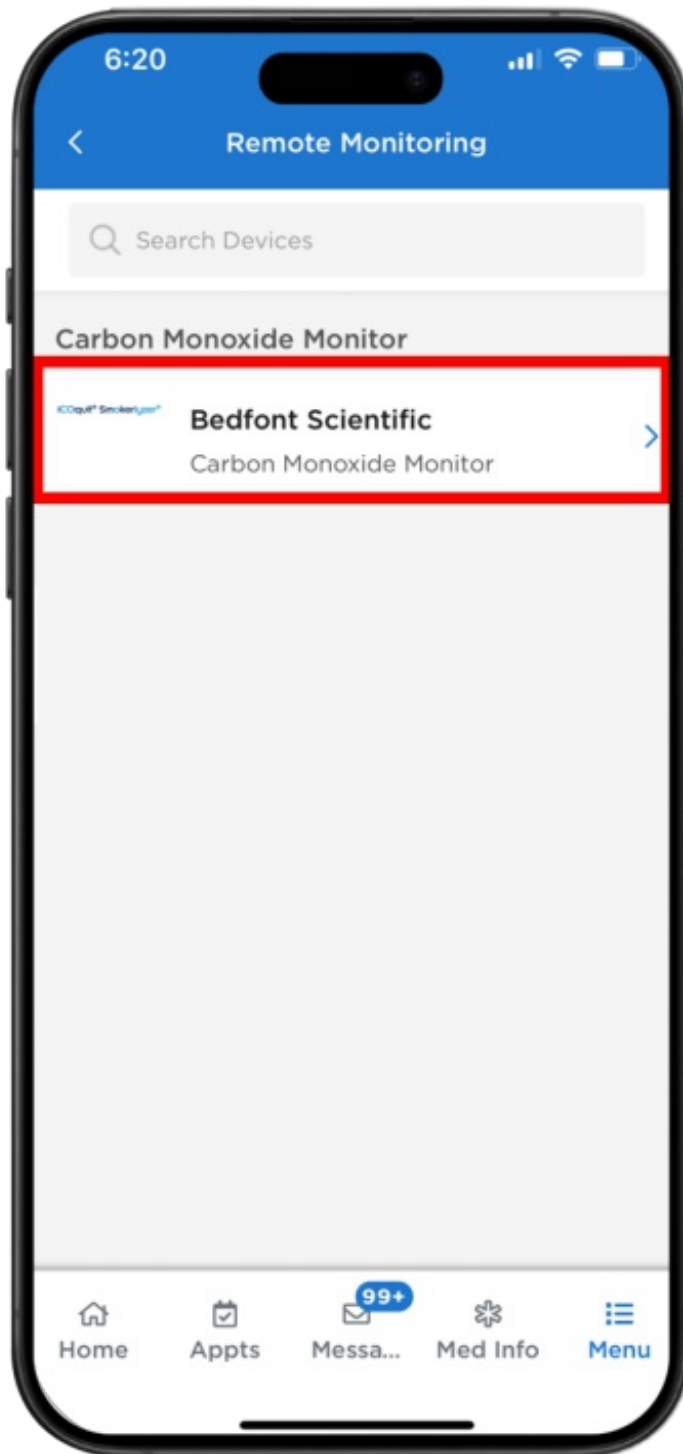


Figure 4. The Bedfont Scientific option.

6. Tap the **New breath test** button (see Figure 5).

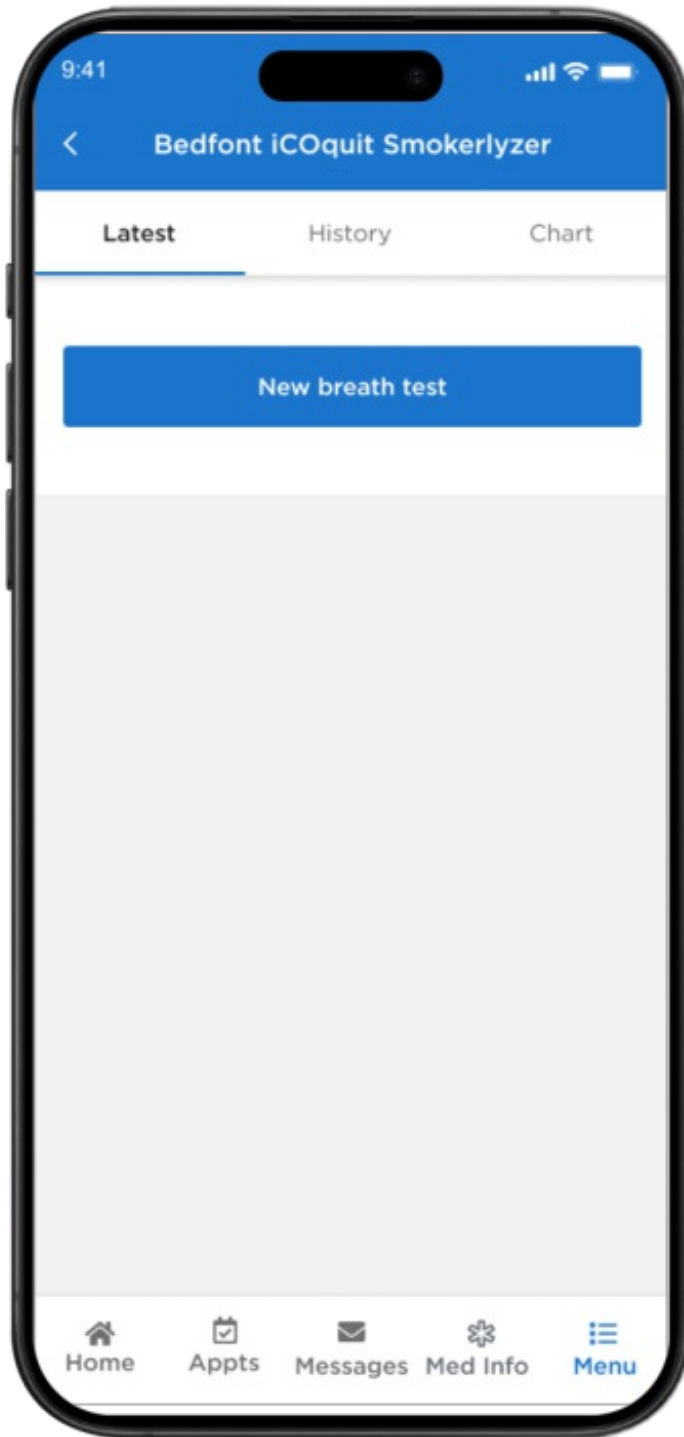


Figure 5. The new breath test button.

Instructions for starting the iCOquit Device

1. Get your iCOquit device. Press the blue power button on the device. Follow the instructions in MyMSK (see Figure 6).

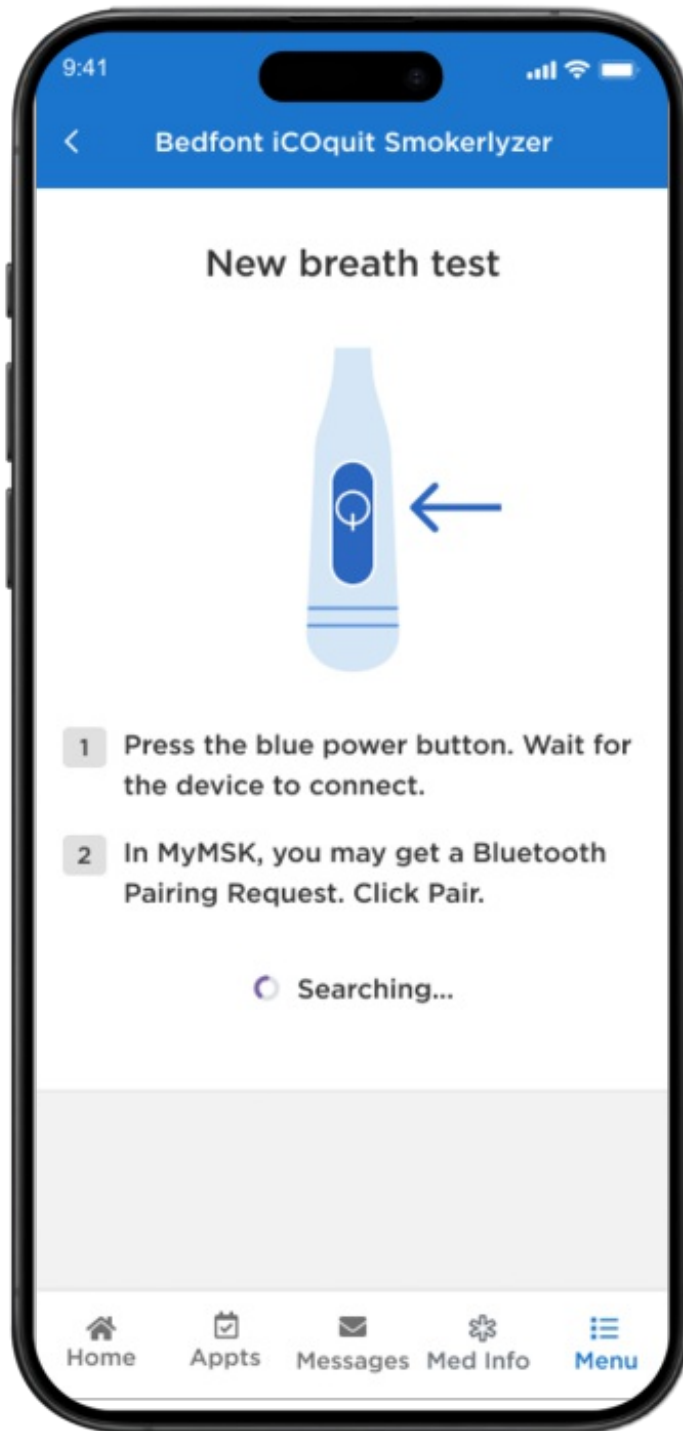


Figure 6. Picture in MyMSK of the device “on” button.

2. Wait for the device to connect. In MyMSK, you may get a **Bluetooth Pairing Request**. Select **Pair or OK** (see Figure 7).

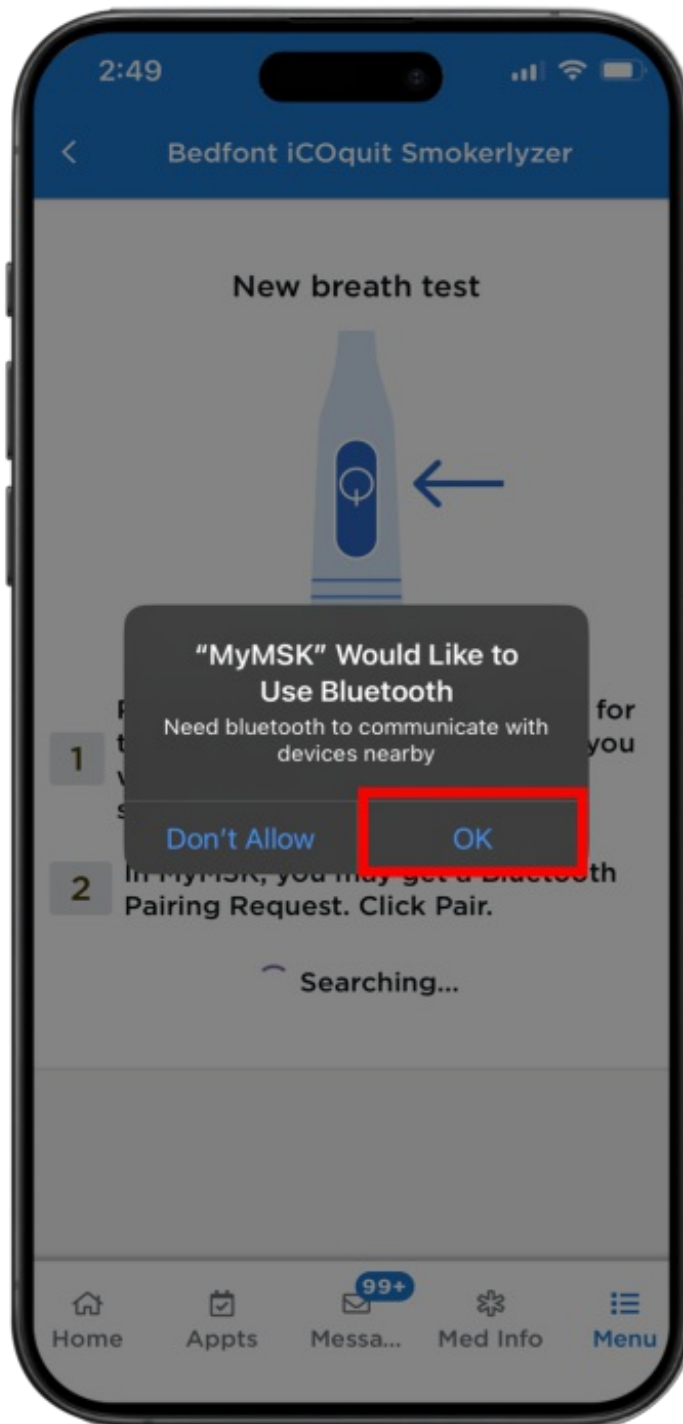


Figure 7. Bluetooth pairing request screen.

3. You'll see the message **You're connected**. Select the **Continue** button (see Figure 8).

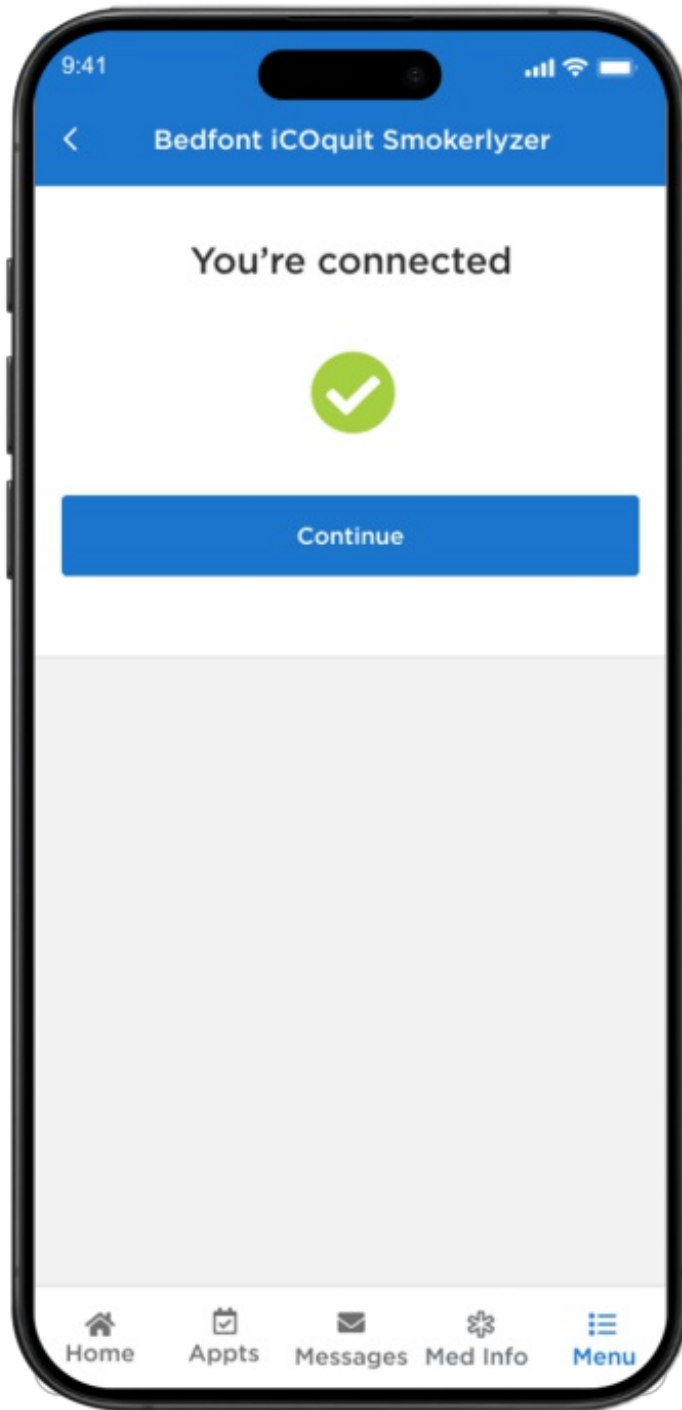


Figure 8. The Continue button will appear after MyMSK is connected to your device.

If you get an error message in MyMSK (see Figure 9), try again. Press the **blue power button** on your device.

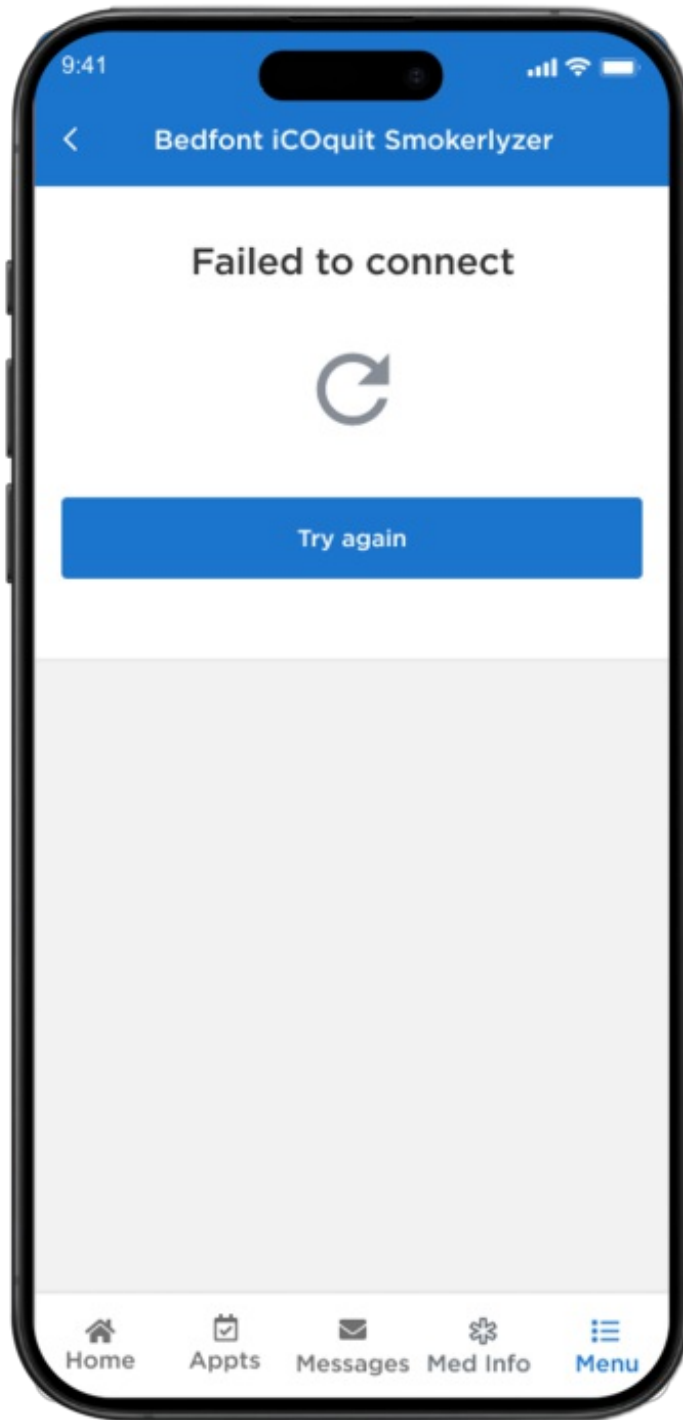


Figure 9. The connection error screen in MyMSK.

4. Once the device is connected to MyMSK, you're ready to start your test. Select the **Start breath test** button (see Figure 10).

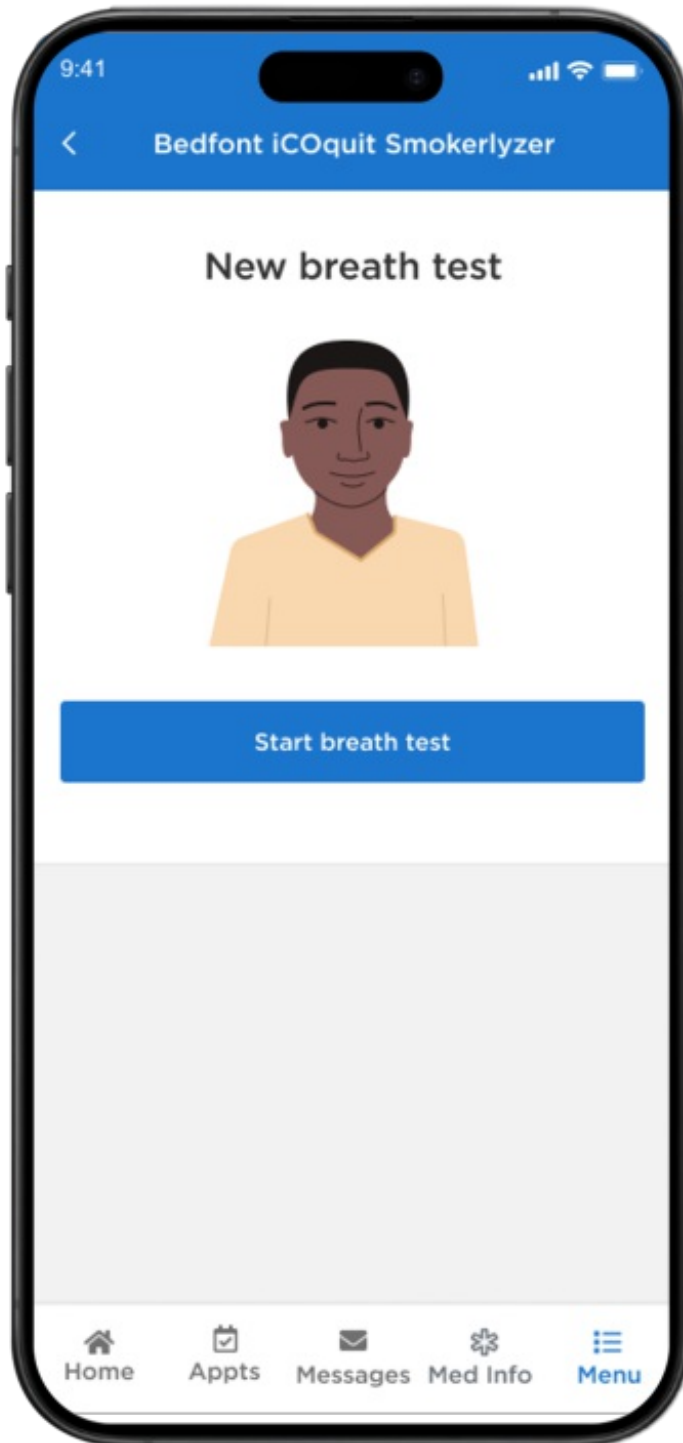


Figure 10. The screen in MyMSK with the Start breath test button

5. Take a deep breath (see Figure 11). This is called inhaling.

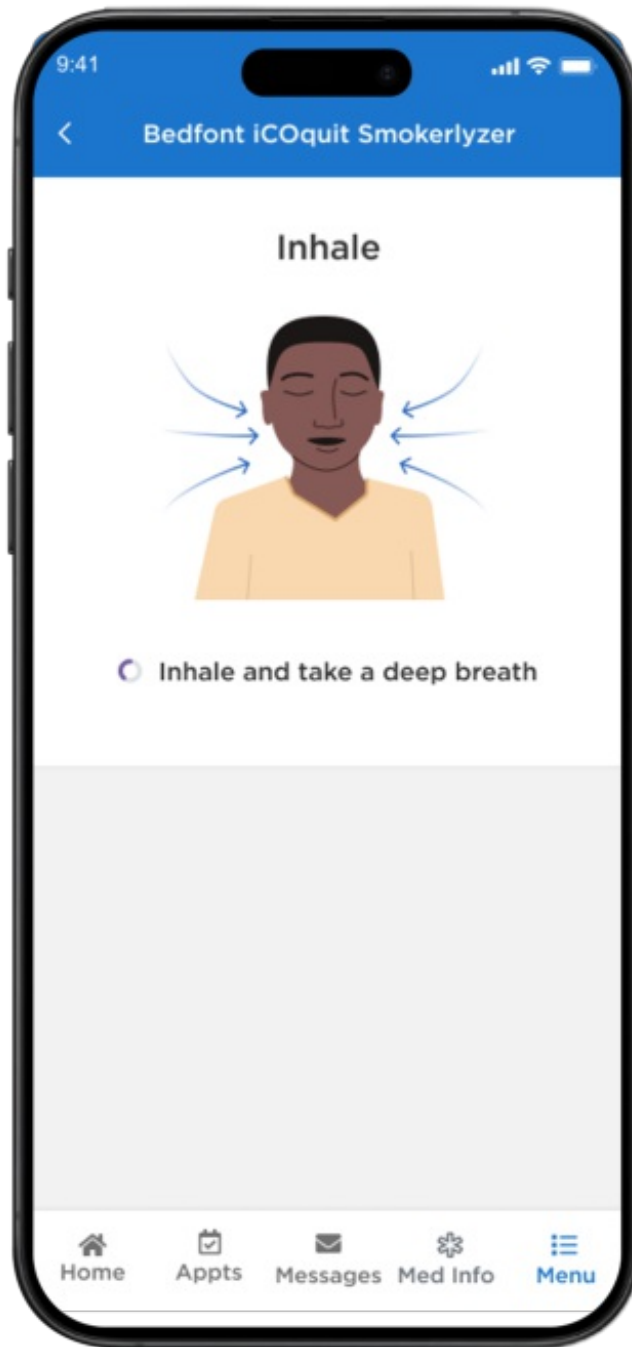


Figure 11. The screen in MyMSK that shows it's time to inhale (breathe in).

6. Hold your breath for about 10 seconds, while the screen counts down the seconds (see Figure 12).

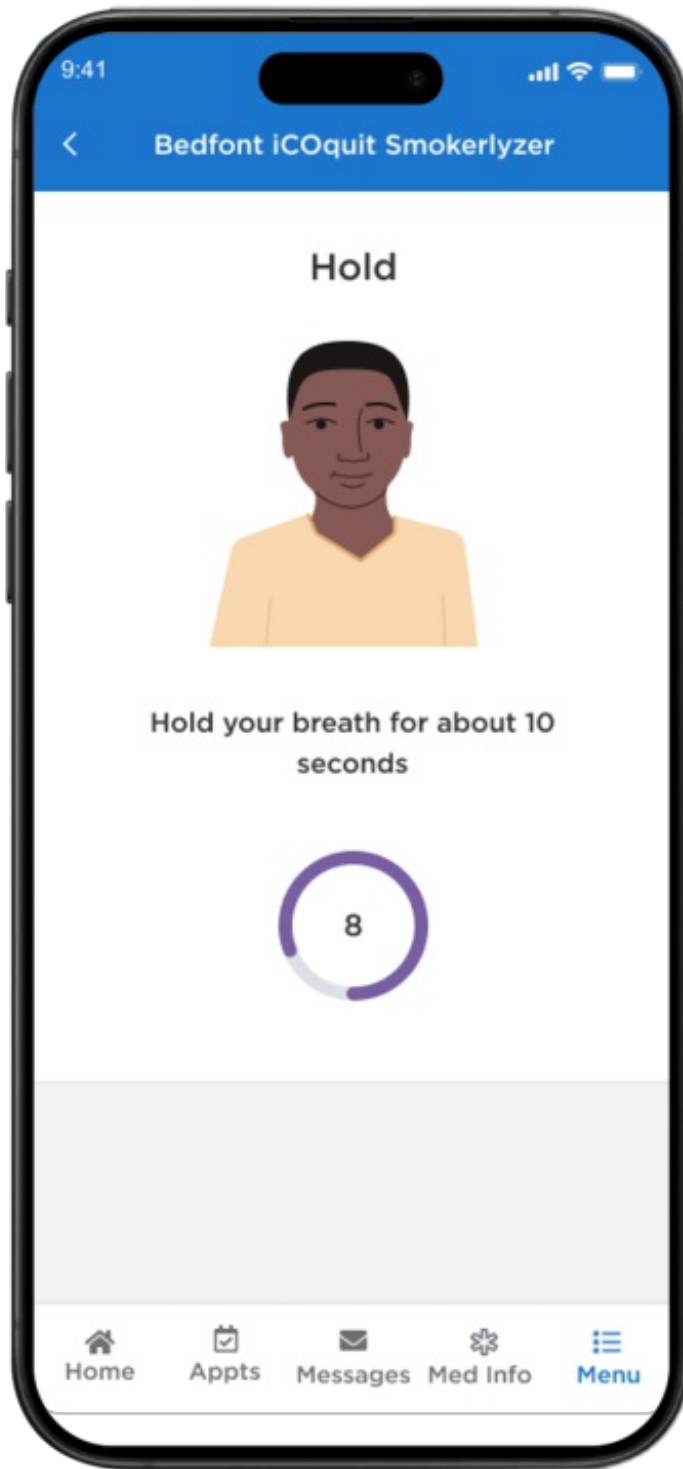


Figure 12. The screen in MyMSK while you hold your breath.

7. Put the device to your mouth. Do not cover the vent on the back of the device. Slowly blow into the device until you empty your lungs (see Figure 13).

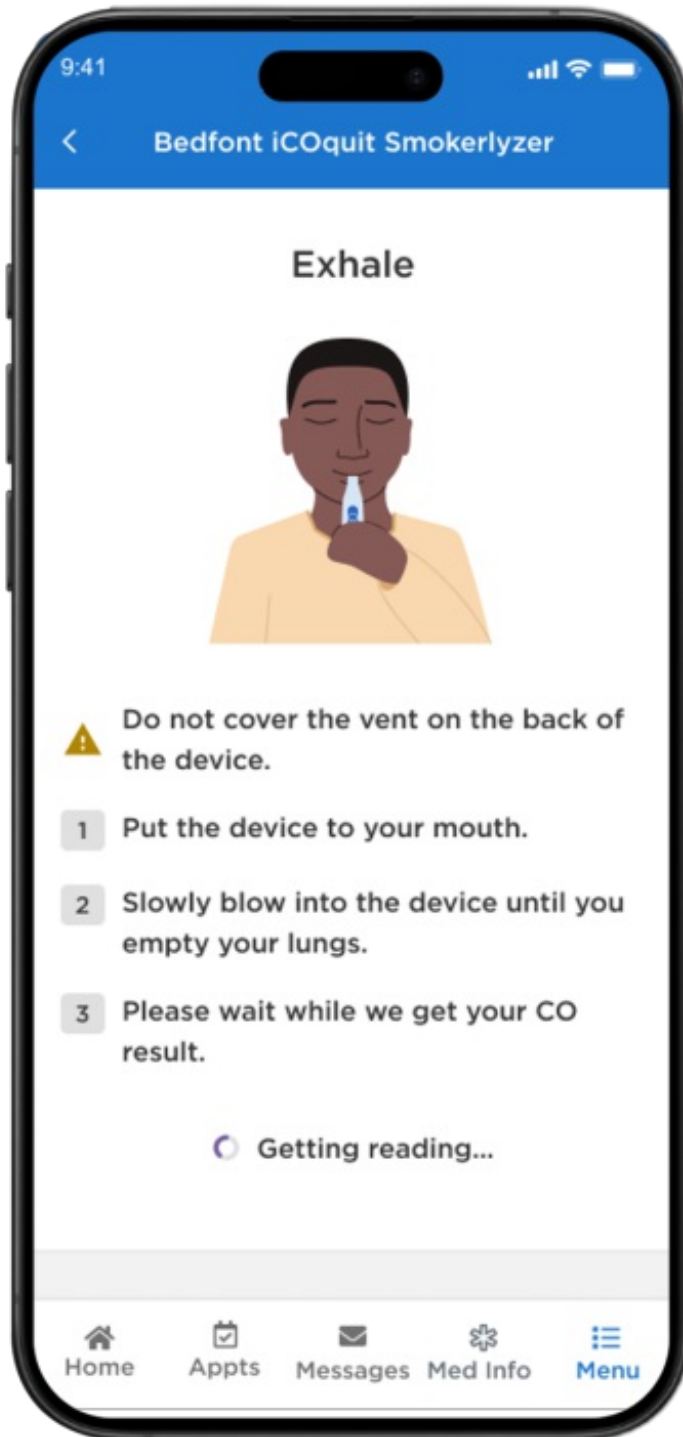


Figure 13. The screen in MyMSK while you're breathing into the device.

8. In a few seconds, MyMSK will show your CO results on your screen. You're now done with your test. When you see your results, hit the **blue Submit** button (see Figure 14).

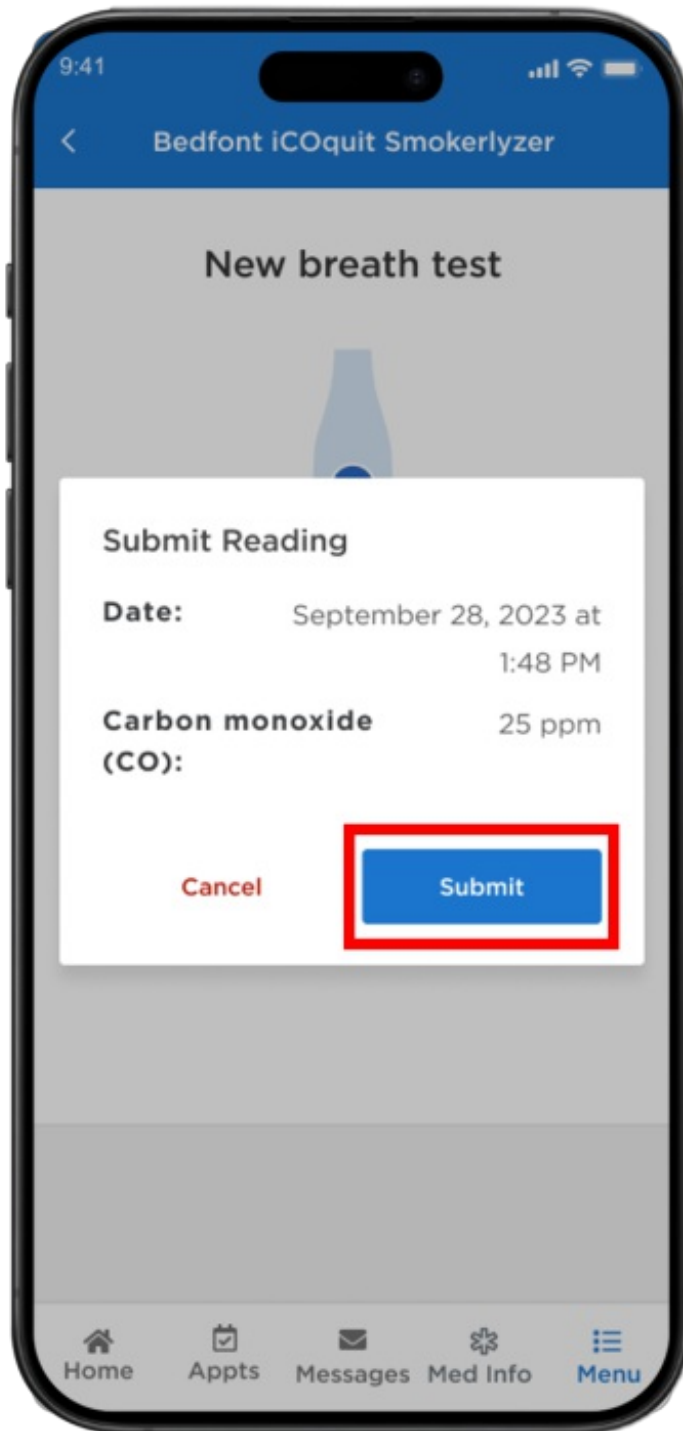


Figure 14. The screen with the blue Submit button.

9. Your most recent reading will be **“latest”** on the screen (see Figure 15). You can also see your readings in a graph by selecting the **Chart tab** on the top right of the screen (see Figure 16).

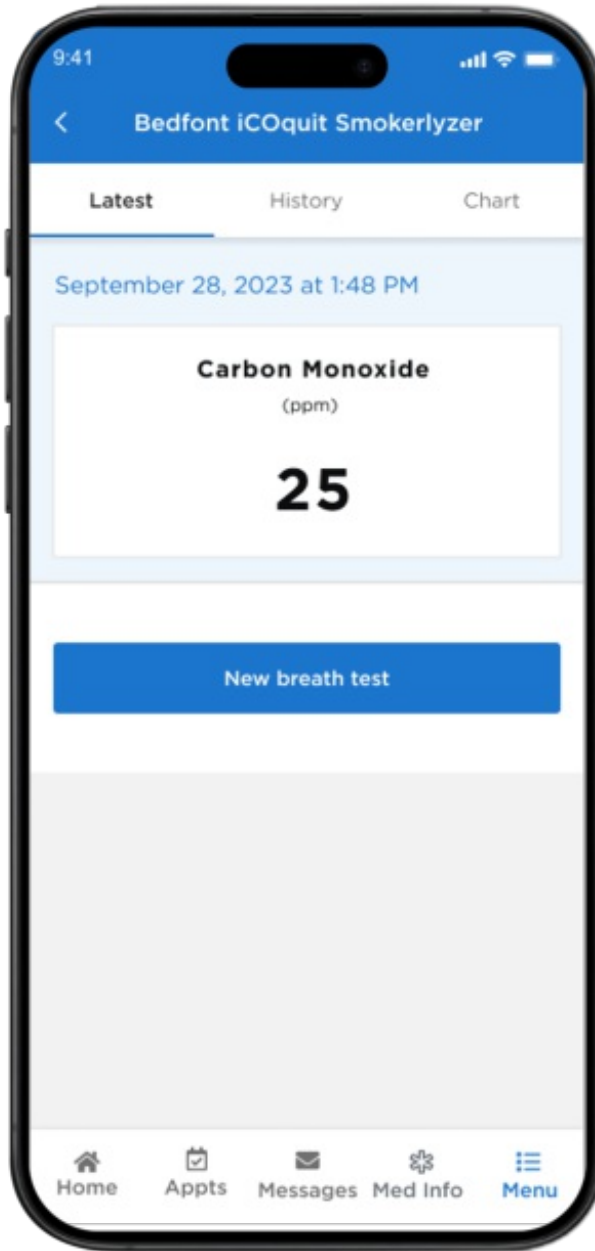


Figure 15. The screen with latest score.

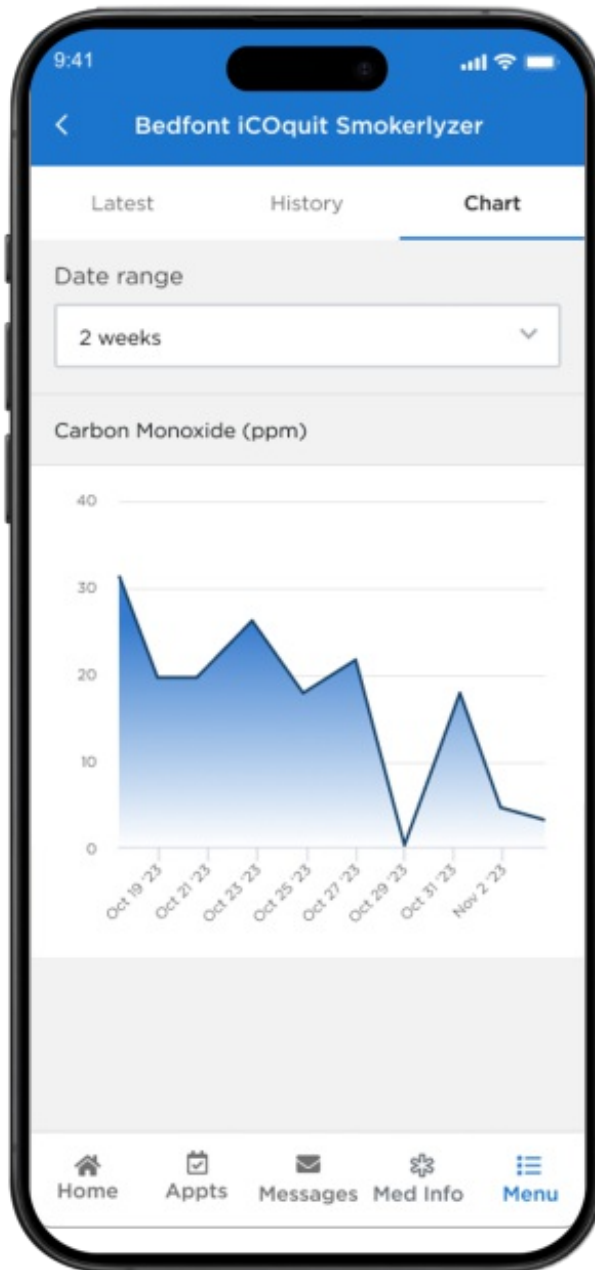


Figure 16. The screen with readings on a graph.

What your breath test results mean

If the reading is **15 to 30 ppm**, it means moderate to heavy smoking.

If the reading is **7 to 14 ppm**, it means light smoking.

If the reading is **0 to 6 ppm**, it means you quit and are no longer smoking.

How to clean the device

To clean the device, wipe the outside with a cloth that's only a little damp. Do not let water get into the breath or exhaust vents. Never put the device in liquid or splash it. Never use alcohol or cleaning solutions with alcohol. This can harm the CO sensor inside.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Carbon Monoxide Testing as Part of Your Tobacco Treatment Program - Last updated on January 9, 2024

All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center