

EXERCISE STRESS TEST



What is an Exercise Stress Test?

An exercise stress test is designed to monitor the electrical activity of the heart (ECG) and blood pressure response during exercise. It can provide valuable information on:

- Coronary artery flow
- Heart rate and rhythm
- Blood pressure
- Abnormal heart rhythm identification
- Effectiveness of drug therapy
- Effectiveness of previous coronary artery intervention

How is the Exercise Stress Test done?

- Ladies will be requested to change into a gown for the top half, as we require a bare chest for this procedure. You will then be asked to lie down on the bed.
- Your skin will be prepared for the electrocardiogram (ECG) by gently rubbing small areas of your chest with rough paper and alcohol. Men with hairy chests may need to have these areas shaved. Electrode patches are then applied to these areas and attached to the ECG monitor. A couple of resting ECGs will be performed.
- You will then be asked to walk on the treadmill, whereby the incline and speed will increase at predetermined intervals. A doctor and technician will monitor your heart rate, rhythm and blood pressure throughout the test. You should exercise for as long as possible to ensure an accurate test. If you experience any symptoms such as chest, arm, jaw pain or discomfort, shortness of breath, or dizziness, let the technician or doctor know immediately.
- After walking on the treadmill you will be asked to lie back on the bed, and further monitoring will take place for a short time after the test.
- The test will take approximately 30 minutes.

Are there any risks?

Some of the more serious risks of this procedure are:

1 in 1,000 people

- Abnormal heart beat
- Development of fluid in the lungs. You may need medication to treat this.
- Chest pain. This is treated with medication.

1 in 2,500 people

- Heart attack

1 in 10,000 people

- Death. The danger is greater if you have heart disease or blocked arteries (coronary artery disease) in the heart already.
- There is a small risk of muscle or joint injury.

How do I prepare for the test?

- You will need to fast for 1 hour prior to your appointment time. You may drink small amounts of water. If you are a diabetic, you may eat as required.
- Wear comfortable clothing (preferably a 2 piece outfit) and footwear as you will be walking on a treadmill. Ladies will be provided with a gown.
- Take all your medications as prescribed, unless otherwise instructed by your doctor.
- Please bring a list of all your medications with you.

When will I receive my results?

A Cardiologist will review your results and a report will be sent to your referring doctor for discussion. *If you will be seeing your doctor within 24 hours of having the test, please advise reception staff and the technician.*

What do I need to bring to my appointment?

- Your referral from your GP or referring specialist (if it is not already held by us).
- A list of your current medications and dosages
- Any previous x-rays or test results relating to your current condition