



## Pharmacological Nuclear Stress Test

A pharmacological Nuclear Stress Test uses medication to work your heart in a manner similar to exercise. This test, which lasts 3-4 hours, is usually ordered to evaluate chest pain, or shortness of breath. It is also used to evaluate patients before surgery or transplant, or after major occurrences such as angioplasty, heart attack or open heart surgery.

The radioactive isotope works in conjunction with our nuclear imaging equipment to give us a clear picture of how your heart is functioning. Lexiscan, Adenosine and Dobutamine are medications that stimulate your heart's activity level in the same way as exercise. One of these will be used.

### WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight before your test.
- Do not have any caffeine, coffee, chocolate, or decaffeinated beverages for 24 hours before the test.
- Do not smoke or use any tobacco products on the day of your test.
- Do not wear any lotion or powder on your chest.
- Patients with diabetes may have juice and toast up to two hours prior to the appointment time. Please check with your doctor regarding insulin or blood sugar-lowering medications.
- Please wear comfortable clothes and shoes. Do not wear one-piece outfits, dress clothes or high heels.
- Check with your doctor if: *you are allergic to Aminophylline, you are taking any breathing medications such as Aminophylline, Theo-Dur, or Uniphyl. You may have to stop taking this medication for 48 hours before the test, however, your instructions should come from your doctor.*
- An intravenous catheter (IV) will be placed in your arm so the isotope and medication can be injected into your blood stream.
- You will lie on a cart for the test. No exercise is necessary.
- First you will be given the isotope Cardiolite. Once the isotope has been injected, you will wait approximately 30-45 minutes. This allows the isotope time to circulate in your body.
- When you return, pictures will be taken of your heart. The scans are painless and last approximately 30 minutes.
- After the scans, one of the medications will be injected through your IV. Your body's response to the medication will be monitored and recorded by an EKG machine. The



EKG will measure your heart rate and rhythm. Your blood pressure will also be checked regularly.

- You will be asked to wait in the waiting room until your next scan, usually 20 to 30 minutes later.
- After this period, another set of pictures will be taken of your heart. After this is done, the test is complete.
- Patients should plan to for the total test time to be approximately 4 to 5 hours.