



Nuclear Exercise Stress Test

A Nuclear Exercise Stress Test is a procedure used to rest the way your heart functions under the stress of exercise. The test, which takes 3-4 hours, is usually ordered to evaluate chest pain, shortness of breath, or palpitations (abnormal heartbeats). It is also used to evaluate heart function in patients who have had angioplasty, heart attack or open heart surgery. The test consists of a resting scan, a treadmill tests, and a scan after exercise. You are given a radioactive isotope that works in conjunction with our nuclear imaging equipment to give us a clear picture of how your heart is functioning.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

- Do not eat or drink anything after the 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 eat juice and toast up to 2 hours prior to the appointment time. Please check with your doctor regarding insulin or blood sugar-lowering medications.
- If you are on Beta Blockers, please do not take the medication the day before your test and the morning of your test unless otherwise directed by your physician.
- Please wear comfortable clothes, such as sweat pants or shorts, and tennis shoes. Electrodes will be placed on your chest.
- An intravenous catheter (IV) will be placed in your arm so the isotope can be injected.
- First, you will be given an isotope. 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.
- Following the pictures, you will exercise. Electrodes will be placed on your chest and you will walk on the treadmill. The treadmill starts out slowly and increases in speed and grade every three minutes. You will walk on the treadmill until you reach your exercise capacity. Your EKG and blood pressure will be monitored continuously while you walk.
- Once you have reached your exercise capacity you will receive another isotope injection through your IV. After one minute, the treadmill will stop.
- You will be asked to sit in the waiting room for a 30 minute rest period. After this rest, you will be scanned again to measure the effect the exercise had on your heart's performance.
- You should have no side effects from the isotope. Because it is not a dye, you do not need to worry about an allergic reaction.
- Approximate time to allow for this test is 4-5 hours.