Stress Test: Myocardial Perfusion
Cardiolite or Sestamibi

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Day | Date | Time |
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Arrive: 15 30 45 60 minutes before your appointment. Go to: ________________________________.

About your appointment ...
• If you will be late or are not able to keep this appointment, please call us. Expect the test to last 3 to 4 hours. Times may vary depending on the site where the stress test is done. A hospital site may complete the test in one day. A clinic site may require 2 clinic visits to complete the test.
• If you are currently breastfeeding or think you might be pregnant, tell your doctor before scheduling this exam.
• Please be sure to arrange care for your child(ren) during your test (we do not provide this service).
• Check with your insurance company about coverage. If they need an OK from your doctor or have other questions, call your doctor’s office.

Preparing for the test
• Some medicine may change your heart’s response to exercise. Check with your doctor about your medications and inhalers prior to the test.
• Do not eat for 4 hours before your test. You may continue to drink fluids. If you have diabetes and need to eat within 2 hours of your test, keep your meal as light as possible.
• Do not smoke or use tobacco products or nicotine at least 12 hours before your test.
• Do not eat or drink anything with any caffeine 24 hours before your test. Caffeine can cause erratic heart rhythms. Some examples are chocolate, coffee, tea and soda – even if they are labeled “decaf” or “caffeine-free.”
• Avoid Excedrin, No-Doz, Anacin or other caffeine-containing medicines, including diet pills.
• Do not use Viagra, Cialis or Levitra for 24 hours prior to the test.
• Dress in comfortable walking shoes and clothes.
• If you plan on flying within 3 days of this test, please inform the staff.

About stress tests
This test is a tool used to look at blood flow to the heart muscle. It will also assess electrical conduction of the heart. There are three parts to this test: the resting scan, the stress test and the stress scan. Two separate scans will be done to look at your heart: under normal conditions or the resting scan, and with increased workload, the stress scan.

The scan is safe
You should know that nuclear medicine scans are generally safe. The tracers that are given have a small amount of radioactive material. The scanning camera itself does not produce any radiation, so if a number of pictures are taken, you are not exposed to more radiation. There are no side effects from the tracers used for the scan.

What you can expect before your test
When you arrive to the Nuclear Medicine department, you will be taken to a dressing room. You will need to undress from the waist up and put on the gown and robe provided.

Once you are changed, you will have an IV (into the vein) inserted, which will be used to inject the radioactive material. This injection will localize in your heart muscle. The resting scan is done first, about 45 to 60 minutes after this injection. While you wait, the staff will prepare you for the second part, the stress test.

Continued
Before the stress test, your skin will be prepped. You will have patches placed on your chest and an electrocardiogram (eh-lehk-troh-KAR-dee-oh-gram) or ECG will be done.

**What you can expect during the test**

There are two imaging sessions for this test. During these, you will lie on a scanning table, on your back, with your arms up over your head. A camera will slowly rotate around your chest for about 15 to 20 minutes, taking picture images of your heart. It is important to lay still and breathe normally.

The *resting scan* is done first. Once the images are complete, you will return to the waiting area until the staff brings you back for the second part, the stress test.

The *stress test* you have will depend on your medical history and physical ability. During the stress test, you will either walk on a treadmill (exercise) or be given IV medication (non-exercise) to increase your heart rate. Your blood pressure and ECG will be taken every 2 to 3 minutes to check your progress before going on to the next level of exercise. During the exercise test the speed and/or elevation will be advanced until you reach the target heart rate or you experience symptoms.

It is very important that you tell the doctor/staff how you are feeling during the stress test. This will tell when to give you a second injection in your IV. You will be encouraged to walk for 1 to 2 minutes more after the injection.

Once the stress test is completed, the final part of the test (stress scan) will take place. The *stress scan* will not start until at least 30 minutes after your last injection. You will return to the waiting area until staff brings you back to start the stress scan. You will lie on the scanning table again, just like you did for the resting scan. This will take another 15 to 20 minutes to get the stress images.

**After your test**

The staff will remove your IV and show you to the dressing area. Once you change your clothes, you may leave and resume your regular diet and activities unless you have received other instructions.

**Getting your results**

A doctor will review your stress scan. A report will be sent to your doctor. Your doctor will discuss your test results with you – be sure to bring up any questions and concerns you have.

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*The information presented is intended for general information and educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care provider. Contact your health care provider if you believe you have a health problem.*