

INFORMATION FOR YOUR NUCLEAR TREADMILL OR EXERCISE STRESS TEST

WHAT IS A NUCLEAR TREADMILL OR EXERCISE STRESS TEST?

The nuclear treadmill or exercise stress test involves exercising on a treadmill while you are closely monitored. This allows the doctor to see how well your heart functions with activity. It can detect heart problems that may not be present at rest. The doctor can determine the cause of chest pain, which can occur with blockages in blood flow to the heart. He or she can also determine your response to treatments and medications, as well as look for abnormal heart rhythms that may occur with exercise. The nuclear stress test also involves taking pictures or images of your heart. A radioactive substance, known as a tracer, is injected into a vein in your arm and travels in the bloodstream to the heart. When combined with exercise, the pictures can detect areas of the heart that are not receiving enough blood flow. This test takes approximately two hours. The time that you will be on the treadmill is about eight minutes. A separate appointment will be set up for the resting portion of the test.

PREPARING FOR YOUR NUCLEAR TREADMILL OR EXERCISE STRESS TEST

- Do not eat four hours prior to your test. Water, juice or uncaffeinated products can be taken up to the time of the test.
- Do not have any caffeinated products 24 hours prior to your test. See attached list for items containing caffeine. Be aware that some over-the-counter medications, such as Excedrin®, may contain caffeine. Please check the label for the ingredients.
- Do not smoke on the day of your test or use any form of nicotine products.
- If you are a diabetic, juice or a light meal is allowed with insulin (half of your normal dose). If you take pills to control your blood sugar, do not take your medication until after the test.
- Please hold the medications on the attached list for 48 hours prior to your test, unless your physician tells you otherwise. Water pills, such as Lasix or furosemide, can be held until after the test is completed. All other medications can be taken as usual.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothes and shoes for walking.
- Please bring all your medications to the test.
- Do not apply lotions or powders to the chest.
- Avoid heavy activity the day of the test.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE NUCLEAR TREADMILL OR EXERCISE STRESS TEST EXERCISE PORTION?

- Before the procedure, you will be given an explanation of the test and then asked to sign a consent form.
- A nurse or technician will insert an intravenous catheter into your hand or arm.
- Electrodes will be placed on your chest and connected by wires to the EKG machine, which allows for continuous monitoring of your heart rhythm.
- A nurse or exercise physiologist will supervise your test.
- You will be shown how to use the treadmill.
- The treadmill will start out slowly at first and gradually increase in speed and incline. Every three minutes, the speed and incline will go up.
- Your blood pressure will be checked frequently and your EKG is continuously monitored.
- During the test, if you experience any chest pain, shortness of breath or dizziness, let the nurse or technician know.
- You will be asked to exercise as long as you can, since that increases the accuracy of the test. When you reach the point at which you can not exercise much longer, a tracer is injected into the intravenous catheter.
- You will be asked to continue to exercise for another one or two minutes after the tracer is injected.
- After the test is completed, your blood pressure and EKG will be checked for several more minutes.
- You will go to the waiting room for approximately 30 to 45 minutes.
- After that, you will have images of your heart taken as you sit in a chair for approximately 20 minutes.

RESTING PORTION

- For the resting part of the test, there are no restrictions.
- You may eat as you would normally.
- You may take your medications as you would normally do.
- This part of the test is done on a separate office visit.
- A technician will give you a second dose of imaging material.
- You will once again sit in a chair, and a camera will take images of your heart at rest.

WHEN WILL I KNOW THE RESULTS OF MY NUCLEAR TREADMILL OR EXERCISE STRESS TEST?

- The final interpretation of the test results will be completed by a cardiologist.
- The physician ordering your test and family doctor will receive a report of the test.

MEDICATIONS TO HOLD

Below, you will find a list of medications that must be held **48 hours prior** to your nuclear treadmill or exercise stress test.

Acebutolol	Corgard®	Nadolol	Tenormin®
Atenolol	Carvedilol	Nebivolol	Timolol
Betaxolol	Kerlone®	Normodyne®	Toprol
Bisoprolol	Labetalol	Penbutolol	Toprol-XL®
Blocadren®	LevatoL®	Pindolol	Viagra®
Bystolic®	Levitra®	Propranolol	Visken®
Cialis®	Lopressor®	Sectral®	Zebeta
Coreg CR®	Metoprolol	Sotalol	

PRETEST INFORMATION

Avoid **caffeine**. Below are examples of products containing caffeine.

DRINKS CONTAINING CAFFEINE

Brewed coffee	Instant tea	Pepsi®	Mr. Pibb®
Instant coffee	Coca-Cola®	Diet Pepsi®	Mellow Yellow®
Decaffeinated coffee	Diet Coke®	Regular colas	Mountain Dew®
Brewed tea	Tab®	Caffeine-free colas	Cocoa
Iced tea	Energy drinks	Dr. Pepper®	

FOODS CONTAINING CAFFEINE

Chocolate candy	Baking chocolates	Chocolate pudding	Brownies
Chocolate-coated candy	Chocolate cake	Chocolate milk	

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS CONTAINING CAFFEINE

Cafergot® (all forms)	Fioricet®	Norgesic™	Synalgos-DC
Esgic (all forms)	Fiorinal® (all forms)	Norgesic Forte™	Wigraine® (all forms)

OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS CONTAINING CAFFEINE

Anacin®	Excedrin®	NoDoz®
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