

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE TEST?

When the test is complete, we will continue to monitor your heart rate and blood pressure as it returns to baseline.

ARE THERE RISKS?

The risk of a serious complication is extremely low. The risk can include symptoms like chest pain, high blood pressure, irregular heartbeats, dizziness or very rarely a heart attack or sudden cardiac arrest. You will be carefully monitored to prevent these and react quickly if they occur.



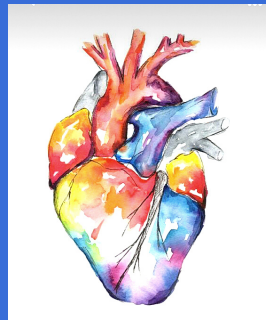
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EXERCISE STRESS ECHO

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WHAT IS EXERCISE STRESS ECHO?

Exercise stress echo combines echocardiography which is an ultrasound of your heart and a stress test.

The purpose of the test is to compare the images of the heart muscle before and after it is stressed. In a healthy heart, all areas of the heart pump harder during exercise. Abnormal movement of the heart may mean there is a blockage in the artery that supplies blood to that area. Abnormal heart wall motion may be seen at rest if there was a previous heart attack. If an artery is only partially blocked and there has not been any heart damage, the motion of the heart is usually normal at rest but may be temporarily abnormal during or immediately after exercise.



HOW IS IT BETTER THAN A STRESS TEST?

- Since a stress echo combines both the ECG recording and echocardiographic assessment, it provides more valuable information than a stress ECG.
- In patients who have an abnormal ECG at baseline, stress (ECG) test cannot be done. Also, females and hypertensive patients have a high probability of false positive stress test. In such patients, stress Echo helps in identifying the possibility of blocks in the heart vessels

PREPARING FOR THE TEST

- Do not eat or drink (except water) for 3 hours prior to the test.
- Exercise or physical labour should be avoided for 24 hours prior. On the day you should come in well rested.
- Wear comfortable exercise clothing and closed-toe shoes for the test.
- Shaving of the chest in male patients is required before coming.
- Continue to take all of your usual medications, unless advised and bring a list of your current medications with you to the clinic.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE TEST?

- After you have signed a consent form, stickers (called electrodes) will be put onto your chest to monitor your heart rate and rhythm. Blood pressure will be taken at rest.
- You will lie on the bed and an echocardiogram will be performed using a transducer coated with the conductive gel to record the images of your heart at rest.
- You will begin walking on a treadmill at a low rate of speed. As you proceed through the test, the speed and incline on the treadmill will increase progressively at pre-defined intervals. You will be instructed to continue walking on the treadmill until a specific heart rate is achieved or you cannot continue. During this time, your heart rhythm, heart rate and blood pressure will be monitored.
- Immediately when the treadmill stops, you will have to lie on the bed and an echocardiogram will again be performed to record images of the heart under stress. Getting on the bed quickly after exercise stops is vital for assessment
- At times, an ultrasound contrast may be injected into the arm vein through a cannula for better imaging of the heart.