Exercise or Chemical Stress Echo Testing

Why do I need this test?

Your doctor has ordered this test to check how your heart works under stress. Results of this test will help your doctor decide what treatment you may need, if any. Please allow about 1 hour for this test.

How do I get ready for the test?

You may need to stop some medicines before the test. Follow your doctor’s orders.

- If you are taking a beta blocker:
  - Do not take it the day before your test or the day of your test. Bring it with you to take it after your test. (A list of beta blockers is on page 3.)
  - Take your beta-blocker as usual.
- Do not take nitrates or wear a Nitro Patch on the day of your test.
- For patients with diabetes:
  - If you take insulin: Call your diabetes care team. Ask if you should take a ½ dose the morning of your test.
  - If you take diabetes medicine by mouth: Don’t take it on the morning of your test. Bring it with you to take after the test. If you have questions, call your diabetes care team.
- No alcohol, smoking or other tobacco for 12 hours before the test.
- Stop eating 3 hours before the test. You may drink water or juice.
- Wear a loose, two-piece outfit and walking shoes.
- Please do not wear scented lotions or perfumes.
- When you arrive, please tell us if
  - You have diabetes
  - You have taken Viagra, Cialis or Levitra within 48 hours.

What happens during this test?

The ultrasound

Before and after your stress test, we will do an ultrasound of your heart. This is a test that uses sound waves and a video screen to show how your heart is working.

1. You will lie on your left side. Men will remove their shirt. Women will wear a gown that opens in the front.
2. We will move a small probe around on your chest. The probe is smeared with gel.
3. We will see a picture of your heart on the screen.
4. If the picture isn’t clear, we may inject a liquid into an IV in your hand or arm. The liquid helps your heart show up better in the pictures.
The stress test

1. We will put a blood pressure cuff on your arm.

2. We will attach small pads to your chest. The pads are hooked to EKG (electrocardiogram) machine that shows how your heart is working.

3. You will begin the stress test.
   - If you can exercise: You will walk on a treadmill or ride a bike for 5 to 15 minutes.
     - You will start at a slow speed. We will slowly increase the speed, incline or resistance.
   - If you cannot exercise: We will give you medicine to mimic the effects of exercise. The medicine goes through the IV slowly.

What are the risks and benefits of this test?

This test will tell us more about your heart. It helps your doctor decide what kind of treatment you may need (if any). Common risks include:

- Changes in blood pressure
- Headache
- Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach)
- Flushing or sweating
- Feeling dizzy or fainting
- Fast or slow heartbeat

The risk for heart attack, stroke or death is very low. Before and during the test, your care team will check your heart, pulse and blood pressure often.

When will I know my results?

- For outpatients: You should have your results within a few days. If you have not heard from us within one week, call your doctor.

- For hospital patients: Your test results will be available in your chart and for your doctor to review.
If your doctor told you to stop taking your beta blocker, please follow the instructions below.

How to Stop Your Beta-Blocker

Before your test, your doctor may ask you to stop taking your beta-blocker. If so:

• Do not take it the day before your test.
• And, do not take it on the day of your test.

Bring it with you when you arrive, so you can take it after the test.

This is a list of beta-blockers:

acebutolol (Sectral)
atenolol (Tenormin)
Betachron (propranolol ER)
betaxolol (Kerlone)
bisoprolol (Zebeta)
Blocadren (timolol)
Bystolic (nebivolol)
carteolol (Cartrol)
carvedilol (Coreg)
Corgard (nadolol)
Corzide (bendroflumethiazide and nadolol)
Inderal, Inderal LA, Inderal XL (propranolol, propranolol LA, propranolol XL)
Inderide (propranolol and HCTZ)
Kerlone (betaxolol)
labetalol (Normodyne, Trandate)
Levatol (penbutolol)
Lopressor, Lopressor HCT (metoprolol, metoprolol and HCTZ)
metoprolol, metoprolol XL (Lopressor, Toprol, Toprol XL)
nadolol (Corgard)
nebivolol (Bystolic)
Normodyne (labetalol)
penbutolol (Levatol)
pindolol (Visken)
propranolol, propranolol ER, propranolol LA, propranolol XL (Betachron, Inderal, Inderal LA, Inderal XL)
Sectral (acebutolol)
Tenoretic (atenolol and chlorthalidone)
Tenormin (atenolol)
Timolide (timolol and HCTZ)
timolol (Blocadren)
Toprol, Toprol XL (metoprolol, metoprolol XL)
Trandate (labetalol, Normodyne)
Visken (pindolol)
Zebeta (bisoprolol)
Ziac (bisoprolol and HCTZ)