

Outpatient Stress Echocardiogram

1. Exercise

2. Pharmacologic (dobutamine)

You exam is scheduled for: _____ *a.m./p.m.*
Day Date Time

Please check in at: _____ *a.m./p.m.*

Park Nicollet Heart and Vascular Center—3rd Floor
St. Louis Park Other: _____

About the exam

An echocardiogram is a diagnostic test that uses ultrasound—high frequency sound waves. These sound waves travel through your body and send back echoes to the computer, which produces a picture on a TV screen. You won't hear or feel these sound waves.

After you complete a “resting” echocardiogram, your heart will be evaluated in one of two ways:

1. You will be asked to exercise using a recumbent bicycle (pedaling while you are lying on your back). After exercising, a second resting echocardiogram will be done or;
2. Medication (dobutamine) will be given intravenously to “speed up” your heart.

Before the exam

Common medications such as beta blockers may influence the results of your stress test. You will be asked to hold your beta blocker for 48 hours prior to your test. Common beta blockers are: atenolol (Tenormin®), metoprolol (Toprol XL®), carvedilol (Coreg®), labetalol (Trandate®) and propranolol (Inderal®).

During the exam

- A sonographer, a person who has had special training in conducting ultrasound examinations, will do the exam. A cardiologist, a physician specializing in care of the heart, will interpret the exam results.
- An ultrasound examination usually causes no discomfort or pain. A small amount of gel will be placed on the skin over your heart and a piece of equipment will be gently placed over that. Occasionally, this area gets sore before the exam is over because there is not much fat there to cushion the pressure. Usually, there is no discomfort.
- Expect the test to take 60 to 90 minutes. Each individual's heart, body shape and breathing determines how long the exam will take.
- Due to the size of the room and the cost of the equipment, children will not be allowed into the ultrasound room. Please do not bring them with you.

(continued)

Day of the exam

- You will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire before the test. Please bring a list of your current medications to refer to when filling out the questionnaire.
- If you are taking medications (other than a beta blocker) on a regular basis, continue these as normal on the day of the test, unless otherwise directed by your doctor.
- You should not eat or smoke for two hours before your test. Your meal before your test should be light and contain no alcohol or caffeinated beverages, such as coffee, tea or colas. Diabetics should follow their normal dietary regimen.

Results

This test does not necessarily include a cardiology consultation. You will most likely hear about the results of your stress test from your referring doctor, not from the doctor monitoring the test. Your results will be sent to your primary doctor within seven to 10 working days of your test date.

It is important to realize that stress testing is not “black and white.” Variations from normal are common. Your doctor will put the test results in perspective with your overall condition.

Questions and scheduling

If you have any questions regarding the test, please call the doctor ordering your test. If you need to cancel or reschedule the test, please call Park Nicollet Heart and Vascular Center cardiology scheduling at 952-993-5305.

Location

Park Nicollet Heart and Vascular Center
3rd Floor
6500 Excelsior Blvd.
St. Louis Park, MN 55426
952-993-5305

Take Hwy. 100 to Excelsior Blvd.; go west about one-half mile.

Enter the Heart and Vascular Center at 6500 Excelsior Blvd. Park in the Blue Ramp.

