



Preparing for a Nuclear Stress Test

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GUNDERSEN
BOSCOBEL AREA
HOSPITAL AND CLINICS

IMPORTANT



Your Doctor Ordered:

_____ Exercise (Treadmill) Nuclear Stress Test
with Cardiolite

_____ Pharmacological (Medicine) Nuclear Stress Test
with Cardiolite

Date: _____

Time: _____

This Stress Test is scheduled to last 3-4 hours.

***** Please read these instructions completely and
call us if you have any questions or concerns
prior to your test.***

What is a Nuclear (Cardiolite) Stress Test?

A Nuclear or Cardiolite Stress Test involves either exercising on a treadmill or being given a medication to show how well your heart is working. It also involves a type of nuclear scan imaging test. A small amount of dye, called Cardiolite, is injected into the vein. The Cardiolite mixes with the bloodstream and heart's arteries to show how well blood flows to the heart muscle and through your heart arteries.

If a part of the heart muscle does not receive a normal blood supply, less Cardiolite will be seen in that part of the heart muscle. Two images are taken of the heart muscle for this test. One image is taken at rest, while the other image is taken after the heart is stressed.

The Stress Test will...

- Establish the blood supply to your heart and if there are any changes from rest to exercise;
- Verify if you have coronary artery disease (CAD); and
- Establish whether more tests are necessary.



Exercise (Treadmill) Nuclear Stress Test

If your doctor has ordered an Exercise Nuclear (Cardiolite) Stress Test, you will be asked to walk on a treadmill to “stress” the heart. The goal is to increase your workload at specific time intervals in order to reach your perceived maximum heart rate, as well as to monitor for any symptoms.

The supervising physician and staff conducting the test will be assessing you and your heart throughout the study.



Pharmacological (Medicine) Nuclear Stress Test

If you have a medical condition that prevents you from walking on the treadmill, your provider will order a pharmacological (medicine) Nuclear (Cardiolite) Stress Test. This will allow you to lie back in a chair and a medication will be given through your IV to increase blood flow to the heart and mimic an exercise test.

The supervising physician and staff conducting the test will be assessing you and your heart throughout the study.



What happens during the test?

1. An IV line will be placed in your hand or arm. A small amount of dye (Cardiolite) will be injected into your IV while you are at rest. The Cardiolite will circulate through your system for a short time.



2. Following a short wait, the resting images will be taken. You will be asked to lie flat on your back on a special table with your arms above your head.

Next, a camera will take pictures of your heart by moving closely around your chest.

3. After the first set of pictures, you will be prepped for the Stress Test portion of the test. Several small pads (electrodes) will be placed on your chest and connected with Electrocardiograph (ECG) wires to monitor your heart rhythm throughout your Stress Test.





4. You may walk on the treadmill or be infused with a medicine that exercises your heart as if you were on the treadmill, depending on what your doctor has ordered for you. Your blood pressure, heart rhythm and oxygen level will be closely monitored throughout the test.
5. The second dose of Cardiolite will be injected through your IV while your heart is being exercised or “stressed.”
6. Following another short wait, where you can now have something to eat or drink, you will return for the final portion of your stress test where you will have the second set of pictures taken of your heart.



How do I prepare for the test?

NOTE: When you arrive for your scheduled stress test, please enter through the Emergency Room entrance and report to the main registration desk to check in.

- **Bring with you:**

- This booklet
- A current list of your medications; and
- A light snack (i.e. cereal bar, yogurt, juice, etc.).

- **For 12 hours before your test, please do not *EAT OR DRINK* any caffeine.**

Avoid the following foods and beverages:

- Coffee or tea (brewed, instant, iced or decaffeinated);
- Colas or soft drinks containing caffeine including those labeled “caffeine-free;”
- Chocolates, including candies, frosting, cookies, pies, cocoa and chocolate milk;
- Energy bars or energy drinks; and
- Aspirin products that contain caffeine.

- **For the 4 hours before your test, *DO NOT EAT ANYTHING* and *DRINK ONLY WATER*.**

- If you have diabetes or are unable to fast for other medical reasons, please consult your doctor before the test for instructions.

- **For the 2 hours before the test:**

- Stop drinking all liquids; and
- Avoid all tobacco use.

- **Take your medications as directed by your doctor ordering the test.**

- **Wear comfortable clothes and walking shoes (if exercising on the treadmill).**

What happens after the test?

- Your IV will be removed.
- The small amount of Cardiolite will be released through your body waste within the next 24 hours. To speed up the process, you are encouraged to drink plenty of liquids.
- Radiation exposure is minimal with this test and is not dangerous. It's about the same exposure as a chest x-ray.
- You will be encouraged to make a follow-up appointment with your provider to discuss the results of your stress test, which are normally available a week after the test.



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