

Cardiac Stress/ Nuclear Medicine Scan- Cardiac nuclear medicine is useful in diagnosing and assessing coronary artery disease. Cardiac nuclear medicine exams provide pictures of the distribution of blood flow to the heart muscle and function of the heart. A **cardiac stress test** is a test used in medicine and cardiology to measure the heart's ability to respond to external stress in a controlled clinical environment.

If you are a female patient between the ages of 9 and 55 you are required to either consent to a pregnancy test or sign a Pregnancy Test Waiver form prior to your exam. The only exception will be for females with a history of total hysterectomy. If you are breastfeeding please inform the technologist before your exam.

You must be NPO (**nothing to eat or drink- including medications**) after midnight the day of the test. **No caffeine after 6pm the day before the test.** If you are diabetic please consult your physician as to any special instructions concerning your diabetes prior to the test. **You can not take any beta blocker medications for 24hrs prior to the test. Please consult with your physician in regards to your heart medications.**

Please bring your current home medications or a list of your medications with you the day of the test. You may be asked to remove some or all of your clothes and wear a gown during the test. You may also be asked to remove jewelry, removable dental hardware, eye glasses, and any metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the images.

A nurse or technologist will insert an intravenous (IV) line into a vein in your hand or arm. The exam will usually begin with an injection of tracer while you are resting. Approximately 30 to 60 minutes after the tracer is injected, you will lie on Nuclear medicine imaging table with your arms over your head for about 15 minutes while images are recorded. Following imaging, you will undergo a stress test, which requires you to exercise by walking on a treadmill. While you exercise, the electrical activity of your heart will be monitored by electrocardiography (ECG) and your blood pressure will be frequently measured. When blood flow to the heart has reached its peak, you will be given the radiotracer through your IV. After you complete the stress test, you may be asked to drink some water. Approximately 30 to 60 minutes later you will be placed on the imaging table a second time so a second series of images can be recorded. At this time, an ECG will also be placed to image the motion of your heart.

If you are unable to use a treadmill you will not exercise but you will be given a drug that will increase blood flow to the heart. There are many types of stressing medications. Your physician will determine the type of stressing medication used.

Actual scanning time for each heart scan varies from 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the type of scanner used. Total time in the nuclear medicine department will be approximately two to four hours.

The images will be reviewed by a Radiologist (a doctor that reads x-rays) and a report will be sent to your ordering physician in 48 hours. Unless your physician tells you otherwise, you may resume your normal activities after your nuclear medicine scan. If any special instructions are necessary, you will be informed by a technologist, nurse or physician before you leave the nuclear medicine department.