



Stress Echocardiography

To Schedule: (319) 861-7778

Questions about procedure: (319) 221-8500

What is Stress Echocardiography?

Stress echocardiography (stress echo), is an exercise test that helps your doctor see how well your heart functions when made to work harder. Harmless sound waves bounce (echo) off your heart. The sound waves show the structure and movement of your heart before and immediately after exercise. Stress echo is painless, noninvasive and involves little risk.

Why should I have a Stress Echocardiography exam?

By comparing the images taken before and after exercise, your doctor can see any changes in the way your heart muscle works when under the stress of exercise. This tells your doctor whether your heart is getting enough blood to meet its increased demand for oxygen. The test results help the doctor plan your treatment and any other tests that are needed.

Preparation:

Please review with your doctor or your doctor's nurse.

- You may have a light meal then nothing to eat or drink for 2 hours before the test. Do not smoke for 2 hours prior to test.
- You will need to stop taking Beta Blocker medications 24 hours before the test. Check with your doctor to see if you are taking these medications.
- Don't have any caffeine 24 hours before your test. This includes coffee, regular **and** decaffeinated, tea, chocolate, **all** cola drinks and soft drinks containing caffeine and over-the counter pain relievers containing caffeine (Anacin, Excedrin).
- If you use an inhaler for breathing problems bring it with you to the procedure.
- Wear a comfortable two-piece outfit and shoes that are comfortable for walking.
- Bring a list of your current medications to the procedure.

- Please bring photo ID.

Procedure:

After you arrive for your stress echo, you'll be asked to undress from the waist up and put on a hospital gown. Small pads (electrodes) are placed on your chest to record your heartbeat. Your blood pressure is also monitored. While you are lying down, a technician moves a painless device (transducer) coated with cool gel firmly over the left side of your chest. Then images of your heart at rest are recorded on videotape.

Next, you're asked to walk on a treadmill until your heart is beating rapidly. Immediately following exercise, a second set of video images of your heart are obtained. The doctor can then display the two sets of images side by side to compare the way your heart functions at rest and after exercise. The physician will review the results of the test with you and send to your physician.

Plan to allow 1-2 hours from arrival to the time you can leave.

Outpatient Registration:

Please park in the Mercy Parking ramp located at 8th Avenue and 8th Street SE. Enter the hospital at the South entrance on ground floor. Proceed to the Non-Invasive Cardiology department.

Your appointment date and time: