

About Your Exercise Echocardiogram (Stress Echo)



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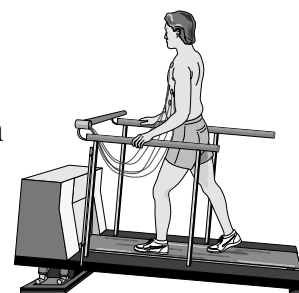
Cardiovascular Services

What is an exercise echocardiogram?

An exercise echocardiogram, also called as a stress echo, is an EKG (a heart test) done while you are exercising. You will be walking on a treadmill. The exercise echo will tell your doctor how your heart handles hard work. The doctor will be able to see your heart working using an echocardiogram. An echocardiogram is a sound wave test of your heart that shows the heart muscle moving as it pumps blood.

Who does the test?

A specially trained technician, sonographer and doctor or Physician Assistant (PA) who specializes in heart disease will do the test.



What should I wear?

Wear slacks/pants and comfortable rubber-soled walking shoes. You will need to take off your clothes from the waist up, and wear a hospital gown.

What will happen during the test?

Your technician will put an EKG cable around your waist. This cable is attached to adhesive electrodes (they look like round stickers) on your chest. Sound wave pictures of your heart will be taken just before and just after you exercise. After the doctor or PA has spoken with you and explained this test, you will be asked to walk on the treadmill. It is important that you walk as long as you can. You will be tired after the test.

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How long will the test last?

A stress echo can last about one hour. How long you actually walk depends on your physical condition and the condition of your heart. You will be asked to walk until you are too tired to keep going. If you have chest pain, leg cramps, shortness of breath, or dizziness, tell the doctor.

After you have finished the walking portion of the test, you will rest for about six minutes. During this time your technician will continue to check your heart beat and blood pressure.

What happens after the test?

If you are an outpatient, you may go home and continue your normal activities. If you are a hospital patient, you will be taken back to your room. You may continue all activities approved by your doctor.

How do I get the results of the test?

- A Cardiologist (heart doctor) will check your test and send the results to your doctor.
- If you are a clinic patient, your doctor will tell you the results at your next visit.