

ASPEN VALLEY HEALTH PATIENT EDUCATION

NUCLEAR REST AND EXERCISE STRESS TESTS (SESTABMIBI)

What is a cardiac nuclear exercise stress test?

The nuclear exercise stress test is designed to evaluate your heart's response to exercise. The nuclear medicine component allows imaging of the blood flow to the muscle of your heart. It is used to test whether you have any evidence of coronary artery narrowing and its severity. It can also give information regarding your level of physical fitness and shows what your heart rhythm is while exercising. During the test, you will be hooked up to EKG electrodes to monitor your heart rhythm and rate; a blood pressure cuff; and pulse oximeter to monitor your oxygen levels. An IV will be inserted so that the nuclear isotope can be injected towards the end of your procedure. There are no symptoms or side effects to the nuclear isotope. After the treadmill test is completed, the technologist will take pictures of your heart using a gamma camera. You will need to come back another day to complete the resting part of the exam. Both the resting and stress portions need to be completed in order for the Cardiologist to read out the exam and give you a result.

Preparation

1. DO NOT consume any caffeine or caffeine products (coffee, decaffeinated coffee, tea, energy drinks, chocolate, Excedrin) 24 HOURS prior to this test.
2. DO NOT eat or drink anything 4 hours prior to the test. Only plain water is ok.
3. Take your medications as normal unless directed by your physician.
4. Wear comfortable walking tennis shoes.
5. Wear loose fitting, comfortable "Exercise type" clothing. Women should wear a sports bra or a bra that does not have an underwire component.
6. Do not wear necklaces or anything around your neck.
7. No lotion on your chest. Men may have hair on their chest trimmed to assure good electrode contact.
8. Please bring your driver's license and insurance card with you.

The Exercise Procedure

1. Check in at the admissions desk in the main lobby of the hospital 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment. If you arrive to the Cardiopulmonary Department where the testing is done 15 minutes late, your appointment may have to be rescheduled due to other patients being scheduled. You will sign a consent form at registration to perform the procedure.

2. After check in, you will be directed to the Cardiopulmonary Department.
3. The technician will bring you to the testing room, review the testing procedure and ask if you have any questions. They will proceed with the prep and application of the EKG electrodes and blood pressure cuff. Baseline EKG and blood pressures will be obtained by the technician before calling the Cardiologist to come to start the test procedure.
4. The Nuclear Medicine Technologist will insert the IV required for the isotope injection which is needed while you are on the treadmill.
5. With the Cardiologist present, the treadmill will be started at a slow walking pace and every 3 minutes the treadmill will increase in speed and incline. Your heart rate, heart rhythm, blood pressure and oxygen saturation will be monitored throughout the procedure. If you develop any symptoms during the procedure such as shortness of breath, fatigue, chest pain, jaw or arm pain, tired legs, etc., inform the Cardiologist immediately.
6. The test continues until you reach the target heart rate set by the Cardiologist, or you develop concerning symptoms. The goal with this test is to inject the Isotope 1 minute before exercise is stopped so that it can circulate in your system. It is important to communicate with the testing team if you feel you can only tolerate 1 more minute. You will then be monitored in the recovery phase until your heart rate and blood pressure have returned to baseline.
7. The Cardiologist will review your resting and stress images. Results can be received on myChart, from the Cardiologist or from your referring provider.

The REST Procedure:

1. Do not eat or drink for 2 hours prior to this testing, water is ok. When you arrive the nuclear medicine technologist will insert another IV and then inject the isotope. The isotope will allow the technologist to see your heart underneath the camera. You will be asked to go eat and drink something after the injection. This will give better quality pictures. You will return approximately 1 hour after the injection for the rest images to be taken.
2. After the scan is completed. You may continue your usual activities, eating, drinking and taking your medications. There are no at home instructions.
3. These images will be reviewed with the exercise images and a report is generated by the Cardiologist.
4. **NOTE: IF you are unable to keep your appointment as scheduled, please contact Diagnostic Scheduling at least 24 hours prior to the appointment at 970-544-1392 to cancel and/or reschedule.**