



St. Claire Regional Medical Center
Diagnostic Imaging Department
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Office 606.783.6761 Fax 606.783.6935

Patients:

These are the instructions for
your scheduled procedure in
our Diagnostic Imaging
Department.

STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM

Scheduling

Your examination has been scheduled for:

Date: _____ **Time:** _____ A.M./P.M.

The above time has been reserved for you. Please arrive 15 minutes before the appointed time so you can register. When you arrive to register, please follow the guidelines below to know where to sign in:

Before 6:30 a.m. - Emergency Room Registration
7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Diagnostic Imaging/Lab Registration Area
After 5:00 p.m. - Admitting Office (by gift shop)

Purpose

A stress echocardiogram combines an exercise test with an echocardiogram or heart ultrasound. The test is performed in order to:

- Measure how well the heart pumps during exercise.
- Check how well the heart muscle pumps as the heart rate increases.
- See how the blood moves through the heart chambers, and the left ventricle (the major pumping chamber of the heart).
- Check medical therapy.
- Check the motion of the heart walls.
- Check high-risk patients prior to major surgery.

Preparation

Clothing:

- Bring athletic shoes and loose fitting clothing so you can move easily. Wear either shorts or pants (not a skirt or dress).
- Since you may perspire, you may want to bring a towel and some toiletries to freshen up after the test. There are no showers.
- Bring extra clothes to change into after the test.

Food:

- Do not eat solid foods during the four (4) hours before your test.
- You may drink water in the morning for thirst. Do not drink coffee, cola, milk or tea.
- People with diabetes should check with their doctors about food intake and withholding their insulin or oral agents.

- STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM, continued -

Medication:

- Check with your doctor about taking medicine on the morning of the test. Some people need medicine before the test, others must avoid taking medication.
- People with diabetes should check with their doctors before withholding any insulin or oral agents.
- Nitroglycerin tables or spray may be used as prescribed for angina on test day.
- Bring any medicine you may need to take after the test.
- Bring a list of current medicine (including over-the-counter medicine and herbals) and allergies.

Other Preparation:

- Please bring reading glasses, if needed.
- Bring a doctor's written order for the specific test you will be having.
- If available, please bring a copy of your most recent EKG and any other information your doctor can send with you.
- Do not smoke for at least four hours before the test. Smoking can affect your test results.

Procedure

- In the testing area, you will change into a patient gown.
- You will be taken into an exam room where a nurse will take a brief history.
- Small patches called electrodes will be placed to your chest. For men, we may need to shave part of the chest first. These patches monitor your heart's electrical activity (EKG) while your test is being performed.
- A blood pressure cuff will be placed on your arm.
- An echocardiogram will be performed while you are resting. Then you will start exercising on a treadmill. The workload of the machine will be increased every 3 minutes until you are too tired to continue or a desired heart rate is reached.
- It is important to tell the testing staff **immediately** if you are having any symptoms: such as fatigue, shortness of breath or chest discomfort.
- When you stop exercising, another echocardiogram will be performed. Your blood pressure and EKG will be monitored until they return to pre-exercise levels.
- The test will take 1-1 ½ hours.
- After the test is performed, you may return to your normal activity.
- The final report will be sent to the doctor on the order and paper work you receive from registration.
- To obtain the results of the stress test, please contact the doctor's office that sent you to St. Claire Regional Medical Center to have the test.

Your physician will discuss the results with you at the time of your next scheduled appointment. The technologist will be unable to give you any information or interpretation about the results of your exam.

If you have questions concerning your upcoming procedure, please call the Diagnostic Imaging Department at 606-783-6761.