

# Exercise Tolerance Test

## What is an Exercise Tolerance Test?

An Exercise Tolerance Test, also known as a Stress Test is a diagnostic study to evaluate cardiac function during exercise. This test is often done to diagnose the presence of coronary artery disease, i.e. blocked arteries, or to adjust medical therapy in patients with known heart artery disease to evaluate for heart rhythm irregularities.

## How do I prepare for an Exercise Tolerance Test?

- You may shower or bathe the morning of your test. However, please don't use lotion or powder on your chest. You may use deodorant.
- Wear loose fitting comfortable clothing and a pair of sneakers or rubber soled shoes.
- Take your usual medications unless otherwise instructed by your physician. Some physicians may discontinue beta blocker or calcium channel blocker or nitrate medications. If you take one of these medications, ask the doctor who ordered this test. Please bring a list of all your medications with dosages and a list of your allergies.
- You can have a light meal up to two hours prior to testing.
- Avoid smoking the day of your test.
- Avoid medications for erectile dysfunction for 72 hours (Viagra, Cialis, Levitra)

## What can I expect during an Exercise Tolerance Test?

- When you arrive, you will receive an explanation of the procedure.
- Ten ECG electrodes will be placed on your chest to monitor your heart during the test.

- A series of resting electrocardiograms (ECG's) will be done before the test.
- Your blood pressure and ECG will be monitored during the test.
- A technician will demonstrate how to walk on the treadmill. The treadmill starts slowly then increases in speed and incline every 3 minutes.
- The stress test will be stopped if you reach your target heart rate, or if significant ECG, blood pressure or heart rate changes occur.
- If you have any discomfort, dizziness or shortness of breath, let the technician know immediately.
- After the exercise portion of the test, you will relax. Your ECG and blood pressure will be monitored during that time. Recovery time usually lasts 15-20 minutes.

### Procedure Time

The appointment will take approximately 1 hour.

### Risks of this Test

The risks of a stress test include an abnormal blood pressure response, an irregular heart rhythm, or very rarely, a heart attack or stroke. This test is essentially safe. If you have questions or concerns regarding this test, please talk with the doctor ordering this test.

### Test Results

You may receive preliminary results at the time of the test. The results of this test will be reviewed by a cardiologist. A final report will be given to your doctor, who will inform you of the findings.

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