

TREADMILL STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY

It is the policy of Cardio Vascular Services (CVS) to ensure the safety and wellbeing of its clients and maintain a standard above the guidelines set by the Australian and New Zealand Cardiac Society.

What is Stress Echocardiography?

Stress Echocardiography is a test that uses an ultrasound to look at how your heart performs when under stress/exercise conditions.

What is the test used for?

Stress Echocardiography is used as a very effective screening tool for patients who may have coronary artery disease. It may also be used in ongoing patient management, finding the cause of palpitations and for unexplained shortness of breath. Stress Echocardiogram have a greater accuracy in identifying or excluding heart disease than a standard exercise test by including ultrasound imaging of your heart.

What does the test involve?

ECG electrodes are attached across your chest to monitor the ECG activity of your heart throughout the test and a cuff is applied to your arm to monitor your blood pressure.

An ultrasound probe with gel will be applied to your chest using gentle pressure. An echocardiogram will then be performed with you on the bed, which is using sound waves to assess your heart.

You will then be required to walk on the treadmill. Initially the speed is set slow with little or no slope. Progressively the treadmill will increase in speed and incline during the test.

Throughout the test a physician will be present to monitor your readings, assess your performance and to minimise the chance of any complications occurring. The test is stopped if you develop symptoms that would prevent you from continuing exercise or at the request of the doctor.

Directly following exercise another short echocardiogram is performed to assess the response of your heart to exercise.

If at any time during the test you are feeling unwell, please report the symptom to the physician.

What are the risks?

Treadmill Stress Echocardiography is low risk and non-invasive procedure, there is however a small but definite chance of complications which you should be aware of. These would be no different to performing strenuous exertion at home or in a gym.

Minor side effects resulting from stress echocardiography include dizziness or fainting, asthma, leg pain or minor heart rhythm disturbances. These are usually temporary and quickly go at the end of the test.

Serious potential complications include a major disturbance of heart rhythm requiring resuscitation, development of heart failure, prolonged angina (heart pain), or a heart attack (Risk ~ 2 or 3 in 10,000 tests).

From these complications arises the very small risk of mortality occurring (Risk ~ 1 in 10,000). The risks both of complications may be higher in patients who are already known to have severe coronary disease.

The doctor performing the test is aware of these risks and will have taken them into account before deciding to commence any test. Please note that emergency equipment and trained personnel are available to deal with any situation that may arise.

Results:

Reports are provided to your referring doctor within three to four working days, if you wish to obtain a copy please ask permission from your referring doctor.

Consent to Testing:

I have read this and had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand the test which I will undergo and I have been made aware of the risks involved. I consent to participate in this test. I understand that the signing of this form is voluntary and I am absolutely free to deny consent if I desire.

Pre-Test Questionnaire

Are you allergic to anything? Yes / No

Specify: _____

Are you pregnant? Yes / No

Breastfeeding? Yes / No

Name:	
Date of Birth:	
Address:	
Signature:	
Today's Date:	

Physician Confirmation:

The procedure and the risks involved have been explained to the patient. The patient has been given the opportunity to ask questions and has confirmed their understanding of the procedure and the risks involved.

Signature:	
Today's Date:	