

EXERCISE STRESS ECHOCARDIOGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

What is an Exercise Stress Echocardiogram and why do I need one?

An exercise stress echo (treadmill) is a combination of an echo and a treadmill exercise test. This type of test looks at how your heart muscle moves and how your heart valves work at rest and then immediately following exercise. This test will help your doctor to see if there are any effects on the pumping action and structure of the heart that might be caused by the narrowing of a coronary artery.

The test takes approximately 60 minutes to complete and is conducted in three parts:

1. A baseline echocardiogram is performed to assess cardiac function and to exclude significant valvular pathology.
2. A treadmill exercise test is then performed with a Doctor qualified in supervising exercise tests in attendance. The treadmill is stopped when you cannot go any longer either because of general fatigue or specific symptom such as chest pain or breathlessness.
3. You will then move quickly over to the couch and layback on your left side and an echocardiography is then performed. You will be monitored for 6 to 8 minutes after the test for heart rhythm. A normal response is for the heart to beat harder with stress compared to the resting test and comparisons will be made between these two studies, which will help in the diagnosis.

To prepare for this test, you must:

- Eat a light breakfast or lunch.
 - Bring or wear loose-fitting clothing and comfortable walking or jogging shoes.
 - Please take all your medication as usual with the following exceptions (this should be discussed with your referring doctor):
 - Beta blocker** e.g. Atenolol, Metoprolol, Bisoprolol, Carvedilol.
 - Verapamil** e.g. Securon, Cordilox.
 - Diltiazem** e.g. Tildiem, Adizem, Angitil, Slozem.
- DO NOT take the above heart medications one day before and on the day of your test.**

Is the Exercise Stress Echocardiogram a safe test?

Exercise stress echocardiogram is regarded as the current gold standard for a physiological test for angina. It is an extremely safe test as it is just like exercising as if you were at home.

At 66 Harley Street we take every precaution with respect to full and complete training of attending technical staff (usually the echocardiographer, exercise test physiologist and a cardiologist).

There is an extremely small risk (less than 1 in 10,000) of developing an allergic reaction if contrast is used. **If you have had allergic reactions to any medicines before please inform your Doctor before starting the test.**

If you suffer with angina, there is an extremely small risk (less than 1 in 10,000) you may have a small heart attack during the test.

If you have any concerns about the level of yours symptoms or any change between seeing the doctor who has ordered the test and, the scheduled test booked at 66 Harley Street please inform the technicians and the attending doctor.

The exercise test team will be happy to help with any concerns on the following number **020 7436 4568**.