

EXERCISE TEST INFORMATION SHEET

What is an Exercise ECG test (ETT)?

An Exercise ECG Test records the electrical activity of your heart whilst you exercise on a treadmill. It helps to diagnose ischaemic heart disease, which is the common cause of angina and other heart problems. It can also help to assess the severity of ischaemic heart disease. ETT is often done to help to decide if you need further investigations or treatment.

What the test involves?

Small electrodes are stuck on to your chest. Wires from the electrodes are connected to the ECG machine. You will then be asked to exercise on a treadmill. The exercise starts at a very easy pace, and is gradually made more strenuous by increasing the speed and incline of the treadmill. Whilst you exercise, ECG tracings are made and you will also have your blood pressure measured from time to time. The test lasts about 15 to 30 minutes

Will I cope with the Exercise required?

Most people manage to do the ETT. It can be hard work, but the level of exercise chosen aims to match your normal capabilities. At any stage you can tell the person doing the test if you feel it is too difficult, and the test will stop. The test will also be stopped if you develop unpleasant pains or if you become very tired, or very short of breath

To prepare for this test you need:

You should not have a heavy meal within one hour of the test. Otherwise, there is no special preparation needed. For the test, wear loose-fitting clothes and shoes that are comfortable to walk in. Continue to take your usual medication unless advised otherwise by a doctor.

Is the Exercise ECG Test a safe test?

An ETT is done without any problems in the vast majority of cases. If you do not have ischaemic heart disease then complications are rare. However, complications occur in a small number of people who have ischaemic heart disease. The risk is to develop a myocardial infarction (heart attack) or an arrhythmia (serious heart irregularity) during the test. Medical help is near to hand to deal with possible problems.

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