

Why do I need this test?

This examination will give your doctor information about the blood flow to your heart muscle. The most common reasons for doing this exam are:

- To check for any major blockage of the blood flow to the heart muscle.
- To help your doctor check your heart before any surgery you may need.



What happens before the test?

- Do not eat or drink for 6 hours prior to your test, unless otherwise instructed by your doctor.
- You may take your medications with a sip of water, unless otherwise instructed by your doctor.
- If you are currently taking any heart medications, check with your doctor. He or she *may* ask you to stop certain medications a day or two before the test, including beta blockers and calcium channel blockers. This can help you get more accurate test results.

- Stop taking Theophylline medication 2 days before your test. *Please review your medications with your doctor.*
- **Do not eat or drink caffeinated or decaffeinated products for 24 hours prior to the test, including all coffee, soda, tea and chocolate.**
- **Do not take over-the-counter medications that contain caffeine for 24 hours prior to the test. *Please check labels on these medications.***
- Plan to be at the clinic for up to 4 hours.

Upon arrival

- An intravenous (IV) line will be started and an isotope (a short-lived radioactive tracer) will be injected into a vein in your arm. The tracer is not an x-ray dye or contrast.
- The technologist will then take pictures of your heart. The pictures will show us your heart's blood flow while at rest.
- You will be asked to sit in the waiting room for up to one hour to help the tracer distribution prior to the stress portion of your test.

Before the stress portion of the exam

- We will talk with you about the medications you are taking, any medication allergies and the reason you are having the exam.
- A consent form for the exam will be signed.
- During the medication administration, you may have some chest discomfort, changes in your heartbeat, a slight decrease in your blood pressure, a slight headache, flushed feeling, nausea or some breathing problems. All of these feelings resolve quickly.



What happens during the test?

- After the rest portion of your exam, you will be taken to a stress lab and placed on a heart monitor (EKG), and you will periodically have your blood pressure taken.
- A medication is put through your IV to increase blood flow to the heart muscle.
- The doctor or nurse will check your heart monitor, blood pressure and ask you how you are feeling.
- After the stress portion of the exam, a small amount of isotope (tracer) will be given through the IV.

What happens after the test?

- We will continue to monitor your heart rate and blood pressure as ordered by your doctor.
- The IV will be taken out.
- A second set of pictures will be taken approximately 30-45 minutes after the stress portion of your exam.
- There are no restrictions or limitations after your test, unless otherwise instructed by your doctor. You may resume your usual diet, fluids, medications and activity.