

What is a Stress Echocardiogram with Dobutamine[®]?

A Stress Echocardiogram with Dobutamine[®] is a non-invasive test (no surgery or cutting skin). The test takes about an hour and a half. During this test, electrodes placed on your chest monitor your heart while you get medicine (called Dobutamine[®]) through an intravenous line (IV). This medicine increases your heart rate while a cardiac technician takes ultrasound pictures of your heart.

This test helps your doctor:

- Diagnose coronary artery disease (CAD)
- Find out the possible cause of symptoms such as chest pain (angina)
- Find a safe level of exercise for you
- Help find out if you may be at risk for heart-related conditions, like a heart attack

Note: If you are pregnant, talk to your doctor. You may not be able to have this test.

Before the Test

- **DO NOT eat or drink for 6 hours before the test except for plain drinking water:** You may drink water anytime.
- **You get a confirmation letter** by mail that tells you how to prepare for this test.
- **Bring the requisition form signed by your doctor** to your appointment or we may not be able to do your test.
- **About your medicines:** Please ask your doctor which of your regular medicines to take or stop before the test.
- You will be asked to undress from the waist up for the test and wear a short gown for privacy and comfort.

During the Test

- First, electrodes are placed on your chest. A blood pressure cuff is wrapped around your arm. The nurse places an IV in your arm/hand.
- You lie on your left side while ultrasound pictures of your heart are taken using a transducer (a wand-like object) placed on your chest. This takes a few minutes.
- The staff may use a contrast agent (liquefied gas) during the test to get a better image of your heart.

During the Test *(continued)*

- More images of your heart are taken after the contrast agent is injected.
- Next, the nurse or doctor puts Dobutamine[®] in your IV. Dobutamine[®] increases your heart rate, similar to the effect of exercise. Your heart activity and blood pressure are monitored.
- **Tell the doctor or nurse if you have tightness in the throat, chest pain, or feel tired, lightheaded, or nauseated.**
- More ultrasound pictures of your heart are taken.
- The IV is removed at the end of the test.

After the Test

- You can return to your normal diet. It is good to eat and drink fluids after the test.
- You can go back to your regular medicines.
- You may drive yourself home after the test.
- Return to your normal activities (for example, you may return to work).
- The results of your test are available in a few days. Please remember, it is your doctor, not the staff, who goes over your test results with you.

More Ways to Learn

- Go to www.cpmc.org/learning.
- Visit the American Heart Association Web site at www.americanheart.org.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: How long does the test take?

Answer: Plan to stay at least 1½ hours for the test.

Question: Can I drive home after my test?

Answer: Yes, you may drive yourself home after this test.

Question: Can I return to work after my test?

Answer: You may go back to your normal activities after this test.

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Note: This information is not meant to replace any information or personal medical advice which you get directly from your doctor(s). If you have any questions about this information, such as the risks or benefits of the treatment listed, please ask your doctor(s).