

You are scheduled for a nuclear stress test. We want you to be properly prepared for this test, so please take a moment to read the following:

The test is designed to determine whether your heart muscle is getting enough blood. This is accomplished by labeling red blood cells with a radioactive tracer and “looking at” the labeled blood cells with the use of a nuclear camera. The test involves an investment in time, because two sets of images must be obtained, one at rest and one after either exercise or the injection of a medication which dilates blood vessels. There is a required time delay between the two injections in order to obtain quality images. You may be asked to wait for your second set of pictures or to return later the same day; please allow enough time in your schedule for either.

You can expect the following:

1. The technologist will start an IV in your arm.
2. You will receive an injection of isotope.
3. You will be asked to wait for a while and drink some water while the isotope finds its way to your heart.
4. You will have pictures taken of your heart; the camera is open, and the imaging time will be about 15 minutes.
5. You will perform a stress test on a treadmill or receive an injection of a medication; your ECG will be monitored during this time.
6. You will be asked to wait for a while and have something to eat while the second injection of the isotope finds its way to your heart. You may wish to bring a snack with you.
7. You will have a second set of pictures taken (again, about 15 minutes).

Please be observant of the following:

1. The effects of radioactive isotopes could be damaging to a fetus. Therefore, if you are pregnant or nursing or believe you may be pregnant, please notify the staff before any isotope is injected so that your test can be rescheduled to a safe time. You must be careful to avoid becoming pregnant following the test for as long as the isotope is still in your body.
2. If you are planning to travel within 2 weeks of this test, please notify our staff so they can provide you with a letter for airline security.
3. Do not have caffeine for at least 24 hours before the procedure.
4. Do not eat for four hours before the test. You may have as much water as you would like before the test.
5. Ask your doctor whether to take or skip your medications before the test.
6. Wear comfortable clothes and walking shoes for the test.
7. Please allow 3 hours to complete the test.
8. **If you need to reschedule your test, please call at least 24 hours in advance to avoid a charge for the unused isotope and other medications. The exact cost is available upon request.**

Please try to be patient with the duration of the test; we will do all we can to make the process as efficient as possible.

If you have any questions, please call.

