



How to Prepare for a Stress Echo?

- Take your medication as usual unless your doctor has instructed you otherwise.
- Bring all medications that you are presently taking with you to the test.
- Wear or bring clothing appropriate for exercise.
- Do not apply creams, powders, perfumes or colognes the day of the test.
- No Alcohol and no products containing caffeine for 12 hours prior to the scan.
- This means no products such as coffee, tea, cola, decaffeinated tea/coffee or chocolate. Anything caffeine needs to be stopped for 12 hours prior to the scan.
- You may have a light lunch at least 1 hour prior to the test.
- The test will take about 60 minutes.

What is a Stress Echo?

A stress echo is a procedure used to determine how well your heart and blood vessels are working.

What will happen during the Stress Echo?

A technologist will begin by placing electrodes on your chest that are connected to an ECG. The ECG will measure your heart rate and the regularity of your heartbeats. You will have your blood pressure taken throughout the test.

Next, you will have a resting echocardiogram done. You will lie on your back and a gel will be spread on your chest. The technologist will use a device called a transducer. The transducer transmits sound waves and creates 3D images of your heart on the monitor. The transducer will be placed on your chest near your breastbone and may be moved around your chest to get different views of your heart's internal structures and movements.

Sometimes it is difficult to get a good picture of your heart during an echocardiogram. In these cases, a contrast medium may be injected by the Cardiologist through an intravenous (IV) inserted in your arm. Side effects to this contrast medium are very rare and it is very safe. You will typically not feel any different after the injection.

After the resting echocardiogram, you will be asked to exercise on a treadmill. Depending on your physical condition, you will be asked to increase the intensity of your exercise. You will exercise between 6 and 10 minutes. You will be asked to exercise until you feel tired in order to raise your heart rate as much as possible.

Some patients cannot walk on a treadmill. For these cases, a medication called Dobutamine will be injected through an intravenous (IV) put into your arm to increase the heart rate and blood pressure instead of exercising on the treadmill.

As soon as you are told to stop exercising, another echocardiogram will be done to take more images of your heart working under stress. You will then walk around the room slowly so that your heart rate can return to normal. Your ECG, heart rate, and blood pressure will be monitored until the levels return to normal.

What will happen after the Stress Echo?

You can return to your normal activities. The supervising physician will send the stress echo report to your physician. The results will be given to you by your physician.