

What Is A Stress Test ?

Coronary artery disease (hardening of the arteries to the heart) continues to be the number one cause of death and disability in our country.

A stress test, sometimes called a treadmill test or exercise test, helps your doctor find out how well your heart handles stress (or work). As your body works harder during the test, it requires more fuel (blood and oxygen) and your heart has to pump more blood in order to keep up with this demand. The test can show if there is a lack of blood supply through the arteries that feed the heart muscle.

Taking a stress test can also help your doctor know what kind and what level of exercise is right for you.

What Is Monitored During The Test?

- Your heart rate.
- Your breathing.
- Your blood pressure.
- Your electrocardiogram (ECG).
- Any symptoms that you may

Before Your Test

- have.
- How tired you are.
- ◆ When you schedule your stress test, you will be asked to bring a current list of your medications with you.
- ◆ Ask if there are any medications that you should not take before your test.
- ◆ Make sure that your last meal is well digested before taking a stress test.
- ◆ Make sure you wear comfortable walking shoes and a two-piece outfit.
- ◆ Females will be asked to wear a paper cape from the waist up.
- ◆ Although you will not have to exercise for long, the entire test takes about 30 minutes.

Preliminary results are available immediately after the test. The final results will be sent to your physician within a few days. The information that is provided by the stress test will help your doctor make an accurate diagnosis of your heart and develop your treatment plan. Your doctor can review your test results and your treatment plan with you in detail.



REPORT ANY SYMPTOMS

- ☑ Chest, back, arm or jaw discomfort
- ☑ Shortness of breath
- ☑ Fatigue
- ☑ Dizziness
- ☑ Leg cramps or muscle fatigue

During Your Test

- ◆ You will be asked to read & sign a consent form.
- ◆ Small electrodes will be applied to your chest for monitoring your heart.
- ◆ A blood pressure monitor will be applied to your arm.
- ◆ A pulse oximeter will be applied to one of your right fingers.
- ◆ You will be shown how to use the treadmill. The treadmill starts out slowly and gets faster and steeper at three minute intervals.
- ◆ You should try to exercise on the treadmill as long as possible.
- ◆ It is important that you tell the physician if you have any symptoms.
- ◆ The treadmill will be stopped when you reach your target heart rate or if you have any symptoms.
- ◆ Your blood pressure, heart rate and oximetry will be monitored before, during and after the test.



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HELENA CARDIOLOGY CLINIC EXERCISE STRESS TEST A PATIENT'S GUIDE

