

Stress Testing

What is a Stress Test ?

A stress test helps you find out how well your heart responds to exercise. The test can also help your doctor know the kind and level of exercise that is safe for you.

Why is an Exercise Stress Test ordered?

- If you are having symptoms such as chest pain
- If you have risk factors for heart disease
- If you are extremely tired and short of breath
- To see how your blood pressure responds to exercise
- To see if you have serious irregular heart beats during exercise
- When your doctor wants to see your exercise capacity

How long does the test take?

It usually takes 60 minutes. You can return to your normal activity after the test.



Getting ready for the test

If you are coming from home:

- Bring your medications or a list of medications to the hospital. Take your medications unless your doctor tells you otherwise

If you are coming from home or the hospital:

- You will be asked to sign a consent form
- The staff will discuss any risks of the test with you
- Dress in loose fitting two-piece clothing
- Wear comfortable runners or walking shoes
- Do not smoke for four (4) hours before the test

Fasting:

- Morning patients: Do not eat or drink anything except water after midnight the night before your test. Take your pills in the usual way.
- Afternoon patients: Do not eat or drink anything except water for four (4) hours prior to the test. Take your pills in the usual way.

There may be other instructions given to you by staff (example: if you are diabetic).

What to expect

- A staff member called a Cardiology Technologist will be with you during the test.
- Electrodes similar to those used for a heart tracing will be placed on your chest. They are connected by wires to a monitor. This helps the staff watch your heart's rhythm very closely during the test.
- You will step onto a treadmill and walk according to instructions staff will give you.
- Your blood pressure will be checked before, during and after the test.

Tell the doctor or staff if you are:

- Having chest discomfort, jaw pain or arm pain.
- Feeling sick to your stomach.
- Feeling dizzy.
- Feeling short of breath.
- Feeling too tired to continue with the test.

When will I receive the results?

The doctor who ordered your test will discuss the results with you. Please feel free to ask any questions or concerns you have. we are here to help you.

Where is the test available?

- Hospitals within the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
- Private clinics and doctors' offices
- Cardiac rehabilitation sites (Reh-Fit Centre and Wellness Institute)