

What is a Nuclear Cardiac Stress Test?

A nuclear cardiac stress test helps diagnose and monitor heart problems such as coronary artery disease. Trained medical staff will insert a peripheral IV into your arm, to allow the injection of a small amount of radioactive substance and medications as needed. A camera will then be utilized to take pictures of blood flow in and around your heart. The test has two phases, one when you are resting, and one after you exercise on a treadmill.

Test Prep / Instructions

1. Please arrive 15-20 minutes before your scheduled stress test time.
2. **Tobacco:** Don't smoke on the day of your scan.
3. You may have a very light carbohydrate breakfast (toast, English muffin, or oatmeal) the morning of your test with **water only**.
4. **DO NOT** eat or drink anything with caffeine for **24 hours** before your appointment. This includes chocolate products, hot chocolate, chocolate milk, soda, tea, and coffee. Some over-the-counter medications also contain caffeine, including Anacin, Excedrin, and NoDoz. **Please note that decaffeinated products also contain some caffeine and should be avoided. If these products are consumed within 24 hours, your test will be cancelled.**
5. Please wear loose, comfortable clothing to your appointment and do not apply oil, lotion or cream to your skin on the day of your test.
6. **Leave your jewelry and valuables at home.**
7. Your test could take 1-4 hours so please bring a light snack with you (sandwich, chips, water, etc.).
8. **Do not take** any insulin or diabetic medication on the day of the test if you're fasting.
9. **Do not take** Viagra, Cialis, or Levitra 72 Hours prior to your test.
10. **Continue to take all prescribed medications as scheduled, unless instructed to do otherwise.**
11. If you are considered a "hard stick" for IVs, start drinking water 24 hours before your appointment, to ensure proper hydration and make vein access easier for healthcare professionals.