



Pharmacological (Dobutamine) Stress Echocardiogram

What is it?

A "Stress echo" is a combination of an ultrasound and exercise test. It compares how your heart muscle is pumping before and after exercise. This test takes approximately 40 minutes.

A Dobutamine stress echo is performed when your doctor feels that it is inappropriate for you to exercise on the treadmill. Dobutamine is a medication administered to place your heart under a similar amount of strain as would be achieved with exercise. This information can assist your cardiologist in assessing the state of your heart muscle and the arteries feeding that muscle.

What is Dobutamine?

This medication is used to stimulate increased activity in the heart muscle and allows the cardiologist to see how your heart responds when it has to work harder.

Preparation

As no anaesthetic or sedation is required no limitations are put on your activities for the rest of the day, however, **we do request that you be accompanied by someone on the day of the test, as you may feel flat afterwards.**

Your doctor may advise you to stop some of your cardiac medications for 48 hours prior to your test. If you are in doubt, please contact us.

• **Men** should wear comfortable two-piece clothing allowing access to the chest area. Areas of chest hair may need to be shaved to allow the electrodes to adhere to the skin. If required a technician will do this at the time of the test.

• **Ladies** should wear comfortable two-piece clothing allowing access to the chest area. A loose fitting gown will be provided.

Procedure

You will be weighed to calculate the appropriate dose of Dobutamine. Next a small intravenous line will be inserted by a nurse. You will be required to lie on your left side for the remainder of the test. You will also be connected to an ECG machine for the duration of the test.

The cardiac sonographer will begin by taking images of your heart whilst at rest. A water soluble gel is used as a contact medium between the probe and your chest wall to improve image quality. You will feel pressure on your chest where the sonographer is imaging.

You will then be given an intravenous infusion of Dobutamine and the medication will be increased every 2 minutes. At certain intervals more images of your heart will be acquired. You can expect to feel your heart pounding and possibly even some tingling sensations in your face as a result of the medication. Your cardiologist will be present throughout this part of the test and your blood pressure, heart rate and symptoms will be constantly monitored. When your heart rate has increased sufficiently or at the cardiologist's discretion, the Dobutamine infusion will be ceased. The cardiologist will compare the resting images of your heart with those taken at each interval.

If you need any further information please phone (08) 8297 6888 or visit our website at
saheart.com.au



Results

The cardiologist will verbally provide you with the results at the end of the test and a report of your results will be forwarded to your referring doctor.

What to bring on the day

You will need to bring

- Medicare card
- A current referral from your GP or specialist
- Any concession or health insurance cards

Please note:

It is essential that someone accompanies you on the day of the test as you may feel a little flat afterwards.

Risks

This test is usually performed on patients with known or suspected coronary artery disease. Therefore, there is a minimal risk of complication. Possible rare complications may include abnormal heart rhythms or a very minimal risk of heart attack. The risk of heart attack is rare and death has very rarely been reported (1 in 10,000). The room is equipped with experienced staff and emergency equipment should an emergency arise.

Minor side effects of the Dobutamine medicine are common. These include a lowering of the blood pressure, shortness of breath, dizziness, headache, nausea and fatigue. Many patients do not experience any symptoms. Another medication called, Atropine, is often required in addition to the Dobutamine and this may cause a dry mouth and temporary blurred vision.

If you have any questions or concerns about the risks involved with this type of procedure, please discuss them with your cardiologist.

**FULL PAYMENT WILL BE REQUIRED
ON THE DAY OF THE TEST**

If you need any further information please phone (08) 8297 6888 or visit our website at **saheart.com.au**

Consent

I, (Patient Name) _____

born (Date of Birth) ____/____/____

acknowledge that I have read and agree to the conditions outlined in this document, that I understand the risks associated with Dobutamine Stress Echocardiography and I consent to the procedure.

I do / do not (please circle) want to proceed with Dobutamine Stress Echocardiography.

Sign:

(Patient or Legal Representative)

Witness:

Date:

____/____/____

Patient ID (office use only)
