

# Exercise 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 about 40 minutes.

## Preparation

Take your usual medications on the day of the test unless your cardiologist tells you otherwise.

- **Men** should wear comfortable two-piece clothing allowing access to the chest area and comfortable walking shoes/runners. 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 and comfortable walking shoes/runners. A loose fitting gown will be provided.

## Procedure

The cardiac sonographer will take 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.

Once the resting images have been taken you will be connected to an ECG machine used to perform a standard treadmill exercise test. Your cardiologist will be present throughout this part of the test and your blood pressure, heart rate and symptoms will be constantly monitored. The treadmill will increase in speed and slope. It will be stopped when you cannot walk/run any further, when you have reached an appropriate target or at the cardiologist's discretion. At the end of the test the sonographer will take more images of your heart before your heart rate slows down.

Collecting these pictures can be difficult after exercise and you may be asked to alter your breathing pattern in order for them to be able to obtain good quality images. The cardiologist will compare the resting images to those taken at maximum exertion.

## 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

## 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. Please allow 5 working days before making an appointment with your doctor or notify the sonographer if you have an appointment within the next 5 days.

## Risks

This test is usually performed on patients with known or suspected coronary artery disease. Therefore, there is a minimal risk of complication. A major potential complication is suffering a heart attack during exercise testing. The risk of this occurring 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.

**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](http://saheart.com.au)**



# Consent

I, (Patient Name) \_\_\_\_\_

born (Date of Birth) \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

have read and understood the risks of Exercise Stress Echocardiography and consent to the procedure.

**Sign:**

**Witness:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Patient or Legal Representative)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Patient ID (office use only)**

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**Please return this consent at your earliest convenience**