

Exercise ECG/EKG Stress Test

Please arrive 30 minutes
before your appointment.

Exercise ECG/EKG Stress Test

What is an exercise ECG/EKG stress test?

An exercise ECG/EKG (electrocardiogram) stress test measures your heart's reaction to activity. It is sometimes called an exercise test or a treadmill test.

Why is this test done?

An exercise ECG/EKG stress test is done to:

- › Help your health care provider find out if your heart is getting enough blood.
- › Show how much activity you are able to do.
- › Show if you have an arrhythmia (a problem with the rate or rhythm of your heart).

How do I get ready for the test?

- Bring all of your medication(s) or a list of your medication(s) to your appointment.
- Take your medications as usual, unless your health care provider has given you other instructions.
- Dress in loose-fitting clothing.
- Wear comfortable walking shoes with a good grip.
- The technologist and/or doctor will talk with you about any risks of the test.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form.

- You can eat before your test, but because you will be exercising, we suggest eating a light meal.

How long does the test take?

The test usually takes 30 to 45 minutes.

How is the test done?

- A technologist and/or doctor will be with you during the test.
- Electrodes (sticky patches that conduct electricity) similar to those used for an ECG/EKG will be placed on your chest. They are connected by wires to a monitor. This lets us watch your heart's rhythm during the test.
- You will step onto a treadmill and the doctor will ask you to walk. We will adjust the speed and incline (slight uphill) of the treadmill.
- We will check your blood pressure before, during, and after the test.

Tell the technologist and/or doctor right away if you feel:

- › Chest discomfort and/or pain
- › Jaw or arm pain
- › Sick to your stomach
- › Dizzy
- › Short of breath
- › Too tired to keep walking

When will I get the test results?

- After your test, your health care provider will:
 - › go over the results with you.
 - › give you instructions on following up with your primary health care provider (if you need more tests).
- The health care provider who ordered the test will get the results within a few days.

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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Prepared by: Cardiac Services

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.