Patient & Family Guide

2016

Dobutamine® Stress Echocardiogram

www.nshealth.ca
Dobutamine® Stress Echocardiogram (DSE)

What is a DSE?

• Your coronary arteries supply blood to your heart. A DSE is done to find out if there are any blockages in these arteries and, if so, how severe they are.

• This test may be done when the usual tests for this problem cannot be done or have given inconclusive results.

How do I get ready for the test?

• There is no preparation for this test.

• Please bring a list of your current medications.

• Some patients may feel tired after the test. It’s a good idea to arrange ahead of time for a drive home.

Who will do the test?

The test will be done by a cardiologist (heart doctor) and cardiac sonographer (heart ultrasound specialist). The cardiologist will talk about the test with you, including possible side effects.
What happens during the test?

- Small stickers (electrodes) will be placed on your chest, arms, and legs. They will then be attached to an echocardiogram machine) and an ultrasound machine.

- The medication Dobutamine® will be injected into a vein in your arm. This medication has been given to patients with heart problems for many years. The effect of Dobutamine® on your heart will be monitored with an echocardiogram (ultrasound images of the heart).

- Dobutamine® can sometimes cause chest pain, a feeling that the heart is pounding rapidly, headache, nausea, anxiety, and shakiness. There may be a small drop in blood pressure or an irregular heart rhythm. All of these problems will stop as soon as the Dobutamine® is stopped. There are no long-term effects from this medication.
• You will lie on your side during the procedure.

• A small device called an ultrasound probe will be moved over your chest to get ultrasound images of your heart.

• Your blood pressure and heart rate will be checked every 3 minutes.

• A doctor will be present during the entire test.

• Sometimes, the doctor may inject an additional medication (contrast dye) through the vein in your arm to help improve the ultrasound images.

• An additional medication (atropine) may be given to increase your heart rate during the test. This medication may make your mouth feel dry.

Will there be any discomfort?

• The test is not painful.

• The intravenous (IV) may cause temporary discomfort when it is inserted. There may be a bruise where the needle enters the skin.

How long will the test take?
The test will take about 1½-2 hours.
Outpatients only:
Report to Level 4, Registration Kiosk in the main entrance of the Halifax Infirmary, Robie Street. Next, go directly to the Minor Procedures Clinic to be prepared for your test.

After the test

• You will be taken back to the Minor Procedures recovery area to be monitored for about 1 hour.

• Some patients may feel tired after the test and may benefit from having arranged for a drive home.

If you have any questions, please ask.
We are here to help you.