

Treadmill Stress Test (EST)

What is a Treadmill Stress Test?

- A Treadmill Stress Test records the heart's electrical activity (rate and rhythm) during exercise.
- During the test, the cardiologist and a technician are present.
- Electrodes will be placed on the chest the same as for an electrocardiogram (ECG).
- The patient will be asked to walk on a motorized treadmill.
- The speed and incline of the treadmill will be gradually increased.
- The doctor will be looking for changes in the ECG pattern and any symptoms that the patient may experience.
- The patient may be on the treadmill for up to 15 minutes, depending upon his level of recovery and cardiovascular conditioning.
- The test will be stopped if the patient becomes too tired, has any symptoms such as chest pain.
- The test will last about 30 minutes.
- This test must be ordered by a doctor.

Why is a Treadmill Stress Test done?

- This test will help the doctor evaluate the patient's cardiac condition related to:
 - Irregular heart rhythms
 - If there is a decreased supply of blood and oxygen to the heart with exercise.
 - How hard the heart can work before symptoms develop
 - How quickly the heart recovers after exercise
 - The patient's overall level of cardiovascular conditioning
 - What his exercise target heart rate (THR) should be

What Preparation is needed?

- No caffeine or smoking at least 4 hours prior to test.
- It is important for the patient to ask his doctor:
 - how to adjust insulin and food intake prior to the test if he is a diabetic
 - if he should take his regular medications the morning of the test
 - if he is on a Beta Blocker, can he STOP taking this medication 72 hours before the test as this is recommended for best results
- Do not apply lotions, oils or powders to the chest area
- Wear comfortable clothing (shorts or pants with shirt or blouse) and walking or jogging shoes.