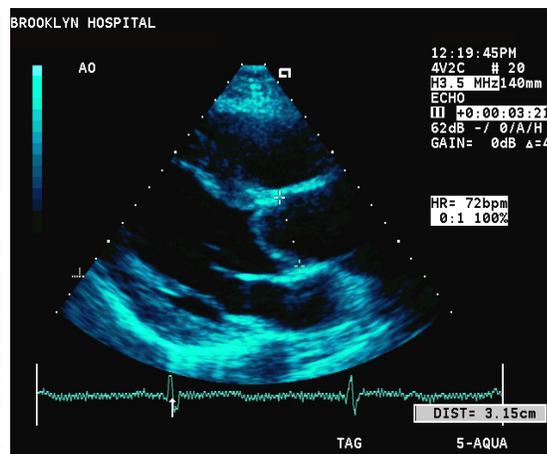


St. Luke's Heart Care Services Patient / Family Information

Stress Echocardiogram (Ultrasound of the Heart)

What is a Stress Echocardiogram?

An echocardiogram is an ultrasound test of the heart. Sound waves are used to make a picture of your heart. A stress echocardiogram is used to look at your heart when you are resting and again when your heart is beating very fast during exercise. You will either walk on a treadmill or have a medication infused through an IV to make your heart beat fast.



Why is a Stress Echocardiogram performed?

A stress echocardiogram allows the doctor to see different parts of your heart and how those parts are working when your heart is beating fast, such as during exercise. If a particular part of the heart is not moving like it should, that could mean that there might be a blockage in one of the blood vessels supplying your heart with blood.

Where is a Stress Echocardiogram performed?

A stress echocardiogram can either be performed in a hospital or at your heart doctor's office. In a hospital the test is performed in a special procedure room located on the 4th floor in the Heart Center. If you are unable to be moved to the Heart Center, the heart doctor and the technicians will bring the equipment to your room to perform the procedure.

What should I wear for the test?

Wear a shirt or blouse that can be taken off easily and wear comfortable pants and shoes to wear while walking on the treadmill.

How long does the test take?

It takes approximately 40 minutes to prepare for and complete the procedure.

What should I expect during the test?

A heart doctor will supervise the test and they will be accompanied by 2 technicians and a nurse if needed. A technician will first look at your heart with an ultrasound machine; these are called the resting pictures. You will then be connected to an EKG machine that will monitor the rhythm of your heart during the exercise on the treadmill. You then start walking on a treadmill; the treadmill will increase in speed in order to get your heart rate up to a certain speed. Once your heart rate has reached a certain speed, the treadmill will stop and the technician will take a second set of heart pictures. The heart doctor will review all the ultrasound pictures of your heart and also the recorded rhythm of your heart during the test.

Are any medications used during the test?

If you are unable to walk on the treadmill, a medication called Dobutamine will be administered through an IV to make your heart increase in speed. Your body will feel like you're walking on a treadmill, but you will be lying in a bed. Other medications to help increase your heart rate may be used during the test.

What should I expect after the test?

After the test the technicians will observe you to make sure your blood pressure and your heart rate have returned to your normal values and that you feel well enough to return home.

When will I know the results of my test?

The heart doctor will review the results of your test with you prior to you leaving the hospital. A copy of the results will go to the doctor that ordered the test and your family doctor.

Outpatient Instructions:

Please register at the Outpatient Registration Desk at the West Entrance **or** you may call (319) 369-8129 to pre-register with Centralized Scheduling, which will reduce your wait time at the registration desk.

Name: _____

Exam Date and Time: _____

Contact the St. Luke's Diagnostic Cardiology Department if you have further questions: (319) 369-7400