

What is it?

The Exercise Treadmill Test evaluates your heart's function as you walk. Sometimes this test is done in combination with an echocardiogram (ultrasound).

How is this done?

As you walk on a treadmill, the nurse will monitor your blood pressure, heart rate and electrocardiogram (EKG). The treadmill begins as a slow walk and gradually increases in speed and incline. You and the nurse will be talking through out the test as you are monitored. You will let the nurse know how you are feeling. When you are tired and need to stop, the treadmill will immediately stop moving.

What is learned?

Blood pressure and heart rate should rise with activity. This test will allow the physician to assess your heart's response. The EKGs obtained during the test are evaluated for potential changes that may signify the heart is not getting enough oxygen. Putting these clinical findings together with any symptoms, your doctor can make a clinical diagnosis.

Is it safe?

The risks of this test are the same as walking unmonitored on the street. The professional clinical staff will monitor you constantly. In a rare event of patient difficulty, we are equipped with the necessary emergency medication and equipment.

How do I prepare for the test?

- ▶ You should wear comfortable shoes and clothes suitable for walking.
- ▶ You will be more comfortable if you do not eat a heavy meal before the test.
- ▶ Do not smoke for 24 hours.
- ▶ Do not drink any caffeine for 24 hours (includes cola and chocolate).
- ▶ Check with your ordering MD as to what medications to hold prior to the test.
- ▶ Bring a current list of all your medications with you.