

Myocardial Perfusion Scan

Also referred to as a nuclear scan, a myocardial perfusion scan is performed in addition to a treadmill stress test to increase the likelihood of finding abnormalities with the arteries of the heart. It is also done in patients who have an abnormal baseline ECG, or an abnormal plain treadmill test. For further details regarding treadmill stress testing, please refer to that section. This test is similar to a plain treadmill exercise test, except that it requires an intravenous (IV) line and can take up to **3-4 hours** to complete. This is because images of the heart are obtained prior to and after exercising. The first set of images is obtained prior to exercising and after being injected with a radioisotope that is taken up by the heart. At peak exercise, another injection of a radioisotope is given to assess blood flow to the heart with exercise. After an appropriate delay, the second set of images is obtained. These two sets of images allow your physician to compare blood flow to the heart at rest and with exercise. If you have a blockage in an artery of the heart, typically there will be less flow of blood to the heart with exercise than there is at rest.

The images of your heart are obtained with a camera that requires you to lay flat on a scanning table with your arms above your head for 20-30 minutes. If you are unable to do this, you should let your physician know immediately as a different type of test may be scheduled. If you are unable to walk on a treadmill for whatever reason, notify your physician so that you may have an alternative stress test that does not require physical exercise. This is called a pharmacological stress test and is done by injecting a medication (Lexiscan, Regadenoson) that mimics the effects of exercise.

****Preparation** for a myocardial perfusion scan usually involves an **overnight fast** or at least **4 hours** prior to the test if it is being done in the afternoon. **Do not drink caffeine or decaffeinated beverages for 24 hours prior to test.** If you are diabetic, you should ask your doctor for instructions regarding your insulin or diabetic medications on the day of the test. Typically these medications are held or the doses are lowered. If you are on heart medications such as nitroglycerin, beta-blocker or calcium channel blocker these medications may need to be held prior to your test. You should wear comfortable clothes and good walking shoes. For women, it is best to wear a loose fitting top that opens in the front. Patients are encouraged to bring a snack or sandwich due to the length of time in the office.

Bring a snack or sandwich to eat since you will be in the office for several hours and are allowed to eat after the exercise portion of the test.

If you are **pregnant**, or have a pregnant spouse at home please notify your doctor, as there is a small risk involved with this test.

Once you have completed your stress test, you may go home or return to work unless otherwise notified. You will receive a call with your results in 24-48 hours. If you do not hear from your doctor in 48 hours, please call the office.

A 24 hour cancellation notification is required for testing. Otherwise there will be a \$185 charge which includes the cost of the medication pre-ordered and a no cancellation fee.

Signature _____

Date: _____