

Regular Treadmill Exercise Stress Test

A regular treadmill exercise stress test checks your heart's reaction to measured amounts of work. The test is done by an exercise physiologist working under the supervision of a cardiologist. The actual exercise time varies with each patient. Plan to spend 45 to 60 minutes total at your appointment. We will send your test results to your physician. Then, your physician will evaluate your results.

Wear comfortable clothing and good walking shoes for your test.

Before the test

You may eat a light meal 2 hours before your test. Wear or bring comfortable clothing and good walking shoes with you.

Plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time. Be sure to bring:

- A list of your your allergies
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter and herbal)
- Photo ID
- Medical insurance information and card
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

Please come to the 8th floor reception desk in Galter Pavilion, 201 East Huron Street.

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 East Huron Street, across from Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For a discounted rate, please bring your parking ticket with you. You can get your ticket validated at the Customer Service Desk on the 1st or 2nd floors of Feinberg and Galter pavilions or the 1st floor of Prentice Women's Hospital.

Upon arrival

We will ask you to undress from the waist up and wear a hospital gown. This allows us to place 10 electrodes on your chest. The electrodes record your heart's electrical activity.

We may need to shave parts of your chest to place the electrodes. Before we put the electrode pads on your chest, we will lightly rub 10 areas with a mild abrasive. Then we will clean the areas with rubbing alcohol to remove normal skin oils and residue. This may cause some skin redness that should go away within a few hours after the test. Once the electrodes are in place, we will attach monitoring wires to each electrode. These lead wires will be connected to a small box worn on a belt around your waist.

During the test

Before exercise begins, you will have an electrocardiogram (ECG) done while you are standing still. Then, the exercise physiologist will:

- Describe the test to you
- Ask questions about your health history
- Show you how to use the treadmill
- Give you the chance to ask questions
- Ask you to consent to the test

You will begin the exercise portion of the test by slowly walking on the treadmill. The exercise physiologist will gradually increase the speed and treadmill slope. They will constantly check your blood pressure, heart rate and heart rhythm during the test. It is important for you to walk on the treadmill long enough to show your heart's reaction to varied amounts of work. This time will differ for each patient. You and the exercise physiologist will decide the correct amount of exercise and/or time needed.

After this, you will sit and rest. Your care team will check your blood pressure, heart rhythm and heart rate during this time. At the end of your recovery period, they will remove the electrodes from your chest and the test will be complete.

Contact us

If you have any questions about or need to schedule this test, please call the Cardiac Stress Testing Laboratory at 312.926.8662 (TTY: 711), Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 4:00 pm.