

## 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 a cardiologist or an exercise physiologist who works under the supervision of a cardiologist. The actual exercise time varies with each patient. The total time in the department is about 45 to 60 minutes. Your test results are sent to and evaluated by your physician.

### *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 with you comfortable clothing and good walking shoes.

On the day of the test, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time. Be sure to bring:

- Your physician's written order for the test if one was given to you
- A list of allergies
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter and herbals)
- Photo ID
- Medical insurance information and card
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

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

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 East Huron Street, across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For discounted rates, please bring your parking ticket with you. Tickets can be validated at the Customer Service desk on the 1st or 2nd floor of the Feinberg and Galter pavilions or the 1st floor of Prentice Women's Hospital (including the 24-hour desk near the Superior Street entrance).

### **Upon arrival**

You will be asked to undress from the waist up and wear a hospital gown. This allows us to place 10 electrodes on your chest. The electrodes measure your heart's electrical activity.

We may need to shave parts of your chest to place the electrodes. Before the electrode pads are put on your chest, 10 areas will be very lightly rubbed with a mild abrasive. Then the areas will be cleaned 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, monitoring wires will be attached 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, an electrocardiogram (ECG) will be done while you are standing still. Then, the exercise physiologist or cardiologist will:

- Describe the test to you
- Ask questions about your health history
- Show you how to use the treadmill
- Give you the opportunity to ask questions
- Ask you to read and sign a hospital consent form

The exercise portion of the test will begin with you slowly walking on the treadmill. The speed and treadmill slope will be gradually increased. Your heart rate and rhythm as well as your blood pressure will be checked constantly during the test. It is important for you to walk on the treadmill long enough to show the heart's reaction to varied amounts of work. This time will differ for each patient. You and the exercise physiologist or cardiologist doing the test will decide the correct amount of exercise and/or time needed.

Following this, you will sit and rest. Your heart rhythm and heart rate, as well as your blood pressure, will be checked during this time. At the end of your recovery period, the electrodes will be removed from your chest and the test will be complete.

## Contact us

For questions or scheduling of your regular treadmill exercise stress test, please call the Cardiac Stress Testing Laboratory at 312.926.8662, Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 4:00 pm.

## Northwestern Medicine – Health Information Resources

For more information, contact Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Alberto Culver Health Learning Center (HLC) at [hlc@nm.org](mailto:hlc@nm.org), or by calling 312.926.5465. Health information professionals can help you find the information you need and provide you with personal support at no charge.

For more information about Northwestern Medicine, please visit our website at [nm.org](http://nm.org).

*Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar al Departamento de Representantes para Pacientes al 312.926.3112.*

The entities that come together as Northwestern Medicine are committed to representing the communities we serve, fostering a culture of inclusion, delivering culturally competent care, providing access to treatment and programs in a nondiscriminatory manner and eliminating healthcare disparities. For questions, please call either Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Patient Representatives Department at 312.926.3112, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363 or the Northwestern Medical Group Patient Representatives Department at 312.695.1100, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363.

Developed by: NMH Department of Noninvasive Cardiac Testing