

Dobutamine Stress Echocardiogram Test

Dobutamine Stress Echo is performed to assess your heart's response to increased work load. This test is performed if you are unable to walk fast enough on the treadmill to test your heart effectively.

During the test, Dobutamine is given through a vein in your arm, to simulate exercise by increasing the heart rate and workload of your heart. It will give the cardiologist a wealth of information about your heart and how it pumps, how the valves are working and most importantly whether the blood supply to the heart is adequate.

What happens during this test?

- The Cardiologist will explain the procedure to you and you will be asked to sign a consent form.
- An intravenous line will be inserted into your arm.
- The sonographer will then take detailed images of your heart. You will need to lie on your left side for about 30 minutes.
- Once baseline images are taken the Dobutamine infusion will be started. Once your heart rate is at the optimum rate the sonographer will take further images and then the infusion will be discontinued.
- The Nurse will be with you throughout the procedure monitoring your ECG and recording your blood pressure at regular intervals.
- It is common to feel your heart pounding or racing. You may feel a warm flushed feeling and other symptoms such as tremor, palpitations, anxiety, headache or chest discomfort, it is important to report any symptoms to the nurse.
- The medication leaves your system minutes after the infusion is discontinued.
- Some people feel shaky after the Dobutamine infusion, and so you may want to arrange for someone to drive you home.
- After the test, you will be given the results by your Cardiologist.

Is there any risk?

Like most procedures in medicine, the risks are small but nevertheless present. There is a 1:1000 chance of a heart attack or important disturbance of heart rhythm and 1:10,000 chance of death. You have been advised to have the test because the benefits outweigh these risks.

Instructions

- Do not eat or drink anything for two (2) hours before the test.
- Do not take *Beta-blocker* medication for 48 hours prior to the test. Examples of Beta-blockers are: atenolol (Anselol, Lo-ten), metoprolol (Betaloc, Lopressor), carvedilol (Dilatrend), Celiprolol (Selectol, Celol), sotalol (Sotacor). ***If you are unsure about what medication to stop please don't hesitate to contact us. It is important that you take all other medications as normal.***

The test takes about 1 hour. Please advise if you have Southern Cross Insurance as we are Affiliated Providers and can obtain your Prior Approval.