

PREPARING FOR YOUR EXERCISE STRESS TEST

**The exercise stress test is a 60-minute appointment.
This includes preparation time before the test and monitoring time after the test.
The actual exercise time is usually between 5 to 10 minutes.**

1. Please arrive 15 minutes early, changed, and ready to exercise.
 - Change rooms are available in the facility. A limited number of coin-operated lockers are available for \$1 (non-refundable, accepts loonies only).
2. Please ensure you **take all your prescribed medications at least two hours before** this test. If you have questions, please call our clinic to speak with a nurse about your concerns 24-48 hours before the test. If you normally take medication(s) with food, and your appointment time does not provide time for a meal, please take your pills at the normal time with water.
 - If you use an inhaler for asthma or other breathing problems, bring it to the test.
3. Please bring all your current medications or a list of current medications, with the dose/ (how much you take of each medication), and how often you take each medication to this appointment for review.
4. Wear loose-fitting clothing such as gym shorts and a short-sleeved top, plus comfortable, closed-toe walking or running shoes and socks. (Note: This test cannot be done in flip flops, sandals, heels or dress shoes).
5. You may eat a light meal up to one hour before your test.
6. Do not exercise on your own or in one of our classes on the day of your test.
7. Avoid caffeine, alcohol, nicotine (e.g., patch, inhaler, or cigarettes) and cannabis products 3 hours before and 1 hour after your appointment.
8. Please report any unusual symptoms you are experiencing to one of the testing staff before, during or after the test.

**If you cannot attend as outlined above, please call our office at 403-571-6950 to reschedule.
A minimum of 48 hours notice is required to cancel or rebook your appointment.**

Exercise Stress Test

Frequently Asked Questions

WHY DO I NEED AN EXERCISE STRESS TEST?

An exercise stress test provides information about how your heart works during physical activity and whether enough blood flows to your heart when it is working hard. This helps to determine:

- Your likelihood of having coronary artery disease (CAD) or to see how serious this disease is in those who are known to have it.
- If you have any abnormal heart rhythms.
- How well your medications and procedures (e.g., angioplasty) are working.
- A safe and effective exercise intensity to start an exercise program at.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO BEFORE I HAVE AN EXERCISE STRESS TEST?

Please review the instructions listed on the previous page.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN EXERCISE STRESS TEST?

The test will take place in our treadmill lab and will be supervised by one of our program doctors. A clinical exercise physiologist will also closely monitor you throughout the test. Before the test begins:

- Staff will place electrodes (small sticky patches) on the skin of your chest. To help an electrode stick to the skin, they may have to shave a patch of hair where the electrode will be attached.
- The electrodes are connected to a machine that monitors and records the electrical activity of your heart. This recording, which is called an EKG (electrocardiogram), shows how fast your heart is beating and your heart's rhythm.
- A blood pressure cuff will be placed on your arm to monitor your blood pressure during the test.

Once the above steps are done, you will exercise on a treadmill or stationary bicycle. If you are unable to use this equipment, you may turn a crank with your arms. At various points during the test, the exercise level will get harder, but you can stop whenever you feel the exercise is too much for you. The exercise stress test typically lasts only 5 to 10 minutes and will continue until you reach your maximum effort. Your blood pressure and heart functions will be monitored for a short time after you stop exercising.

If you feel any chest pain, shortness of breath, or dizziness while exercising, please tell the doctor or exercise physiologist supervising your test.

WHAT TO DO AFTER MY EXERCISE STRESS TEST?

After your exercise stress test is done, you can return to normal activities but should consider the test your exercise for the day. The supervising doctor will review your results at your appointment. A copy of the results will also be sent to your family doctor and cardiologist.